

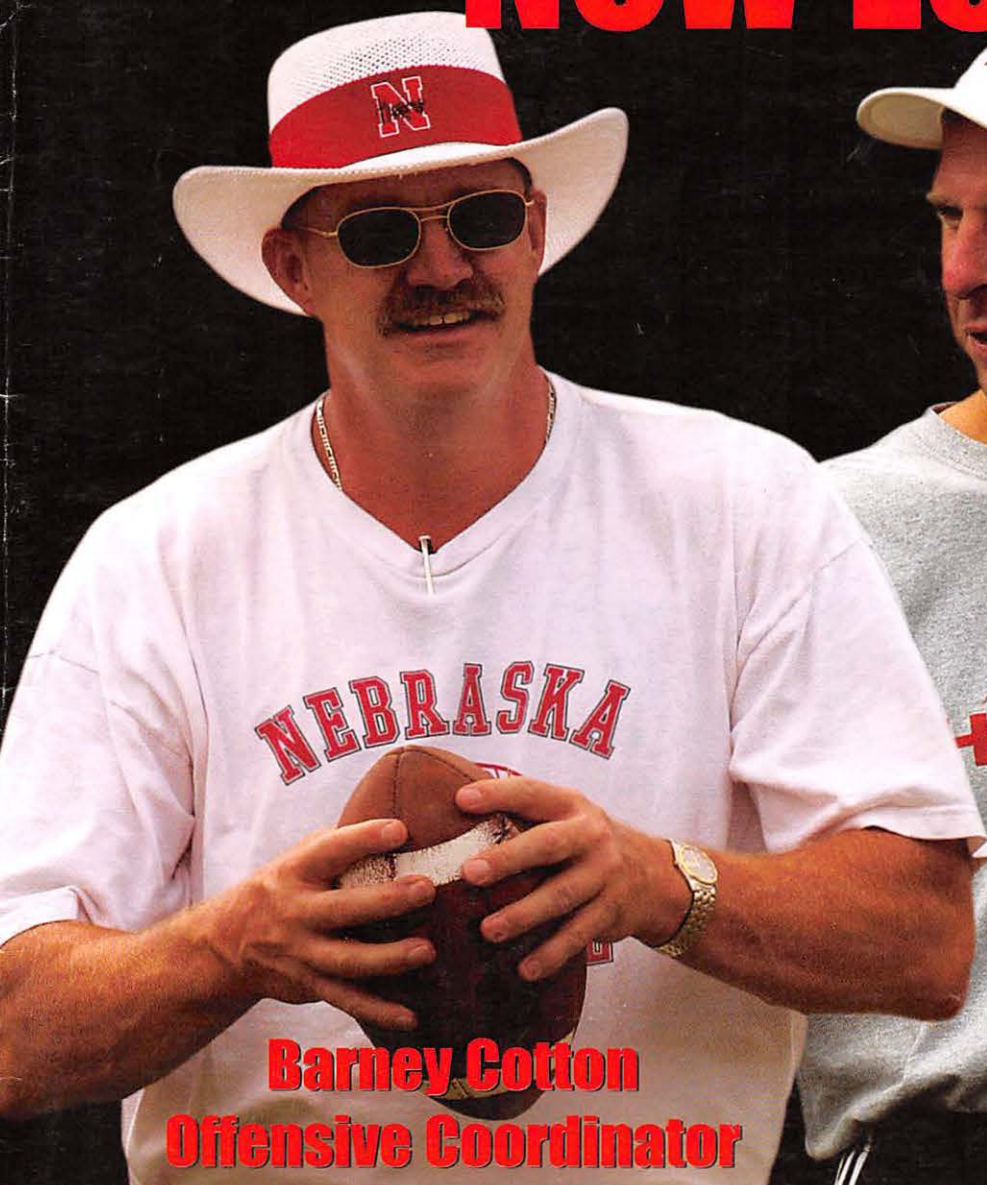
Huskers Illustrated

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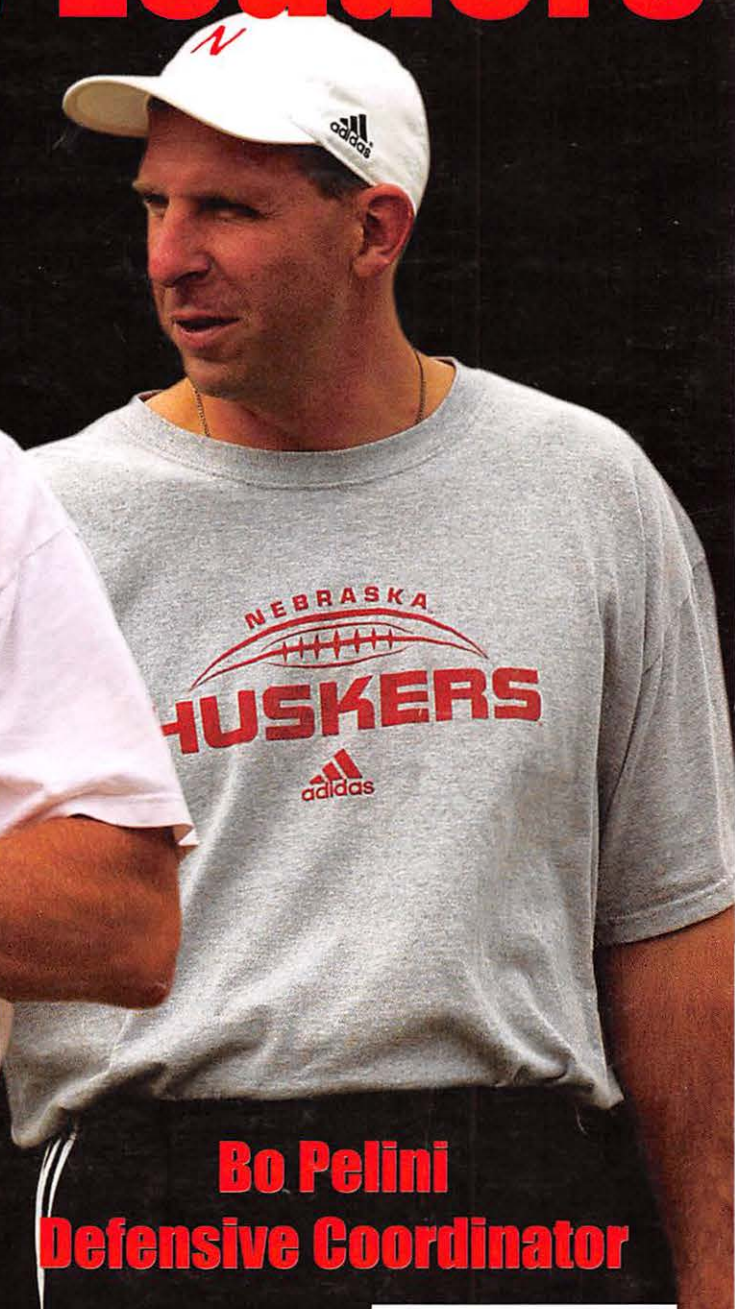
Volume 23, No.7

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New Leaders



Barney Cotton
Offensive Coordinator



Bo Pelini
Defensive Coordinator



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5/02

A Lot To Prove

*Season-opener against Oklahoma State
good opportunity to make early statement*



Brian Hill

THE STAGE is set.

A nationally televised opener against a ranked team provides a perfect opportunity for the 2003 Huskers to make an early statement.

So much has happened since the July 30, 2002, announcement that this game — originally scheduled for Oct. 4 — would be moved to Aug. 30 as the season-opener. Nebraska suffered through a 7-7 season, its worst in 40 years. One of those losses came at Oklahoma State, the Cowboys' first win in the series since 1961 (the teams tied 17-17 in 1973).

The 2003 season-opener will mark the first time since Big 12 Conference play began in 1996 that the Huskers have opened with a league opponent. Nebraska did open its 1995 national championship season by playing Oklahoma State in Stillwater on Aug. 31. That 64-21 victory was the 22nd in Nebraska's streak of 24, which came to an end last Oct. 19.

The 24-21 win over the Huskers started a streak in which Oklahoma State won six of its last seven games, including a 38-28 victory over Oklahoma and a 33-23 win over Southern Miss in the Houston Bowl.

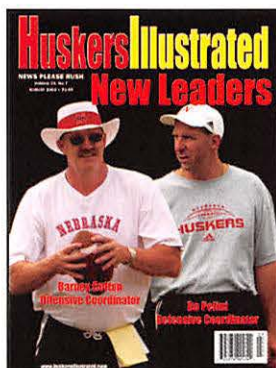
The Cowboys appear to be loaded, at least on offense, with the nation's top receiver in Rashaun Woods, a 1,000-yard rusher in Tatum Bell and an experienced quarterback in Josh Fields, who threw for 3,145 yards and 31 touch-

downs, the majority of them to Woods, who finished with 107 catches, 1,695 yards and 17 touchdowns.

Last year against Nebraska, Woods had 11 catches for 134 yards and a touchdown. The Huskers had a lot of trouble tackling Bell, who carried 33 times for 182 yards.

With that returning cast, as well as kicker Luke Phillips, who has made 26 field goals the last two seasons, the Cowboys were ranked No. 24 in the preseason ESPN/USA Today Coaches Poll. Last year marked the first time in 28 meetings that Nebraska entered the game against OSU unranked.

So in many ways, the roles are reversed as Oklahoma State comes to Lincoln.



For the first time in a long, long time, the Huskers should have the element of surprise on their side. Coach Frank Solich's restructured staff, including new offensive coordinator Barney Cotton and new defensive coordinator Bo Pelini, is bound to throw in a few new twists. The new coordinators are pictured

on the cover and are the subjects of our feature story in this edition of Huskers Illustrated.

There is much, much more on the Huskers, including profiles of senior offensive tackle Dan Vili Waldrop and senior nose tackle Ryon Bingham. Contributing editor Mike Babcock has a look at former NU I-back Paul Miles as the first installment in our "Where Are They Now" series.

The 2003 Huskers are in uncharted territory, entering the season unranked for the first time since 1969. Some "experts" are forecasting a continuation of the downward spiral.

An impressive performance against Oklahoma State would be a good start toward proving them wrong. ■

ON THE COVER

Nebraska's two new coordinators — Barney Cotton (offense) and Bo Pelini (defense) — are working to install their systems during fall camp. *Photos, design by Scott Bruhn.*

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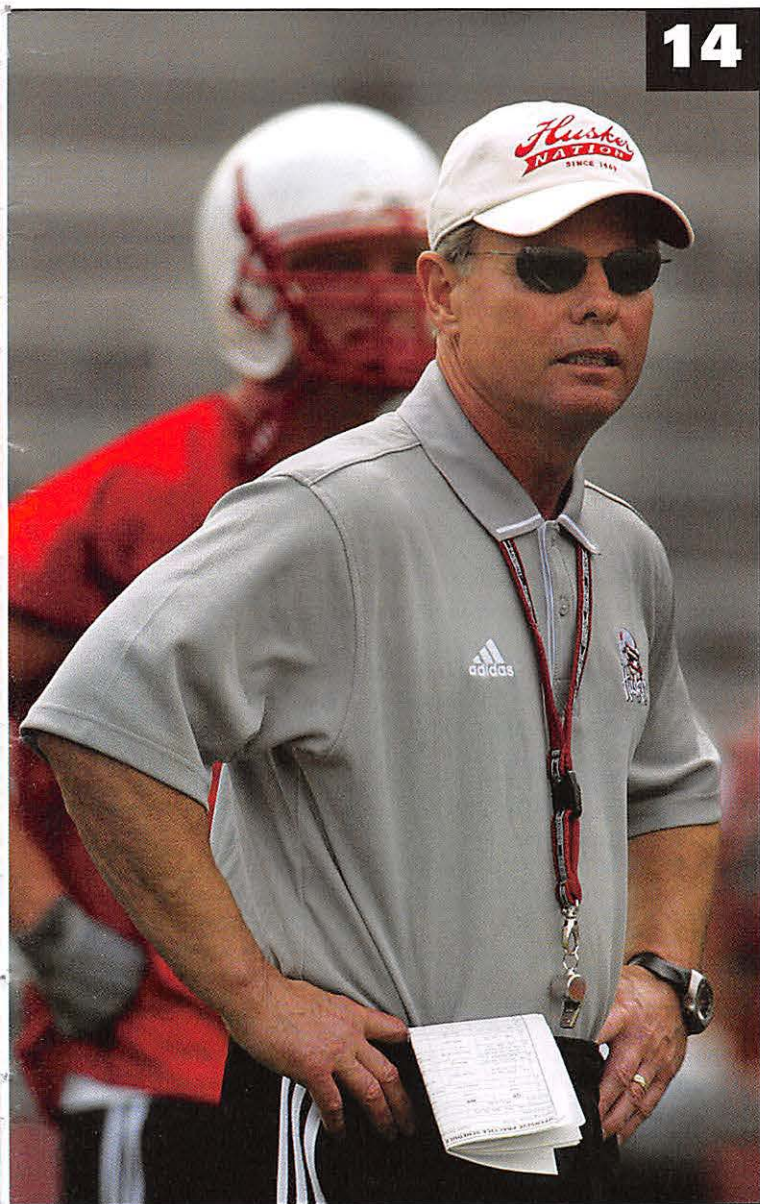
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Huskers Illustrated

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Frank Solich goes into his sixth season as head coach with a restructured staff, including a new offensive coordinator. *By Mike Babcock*

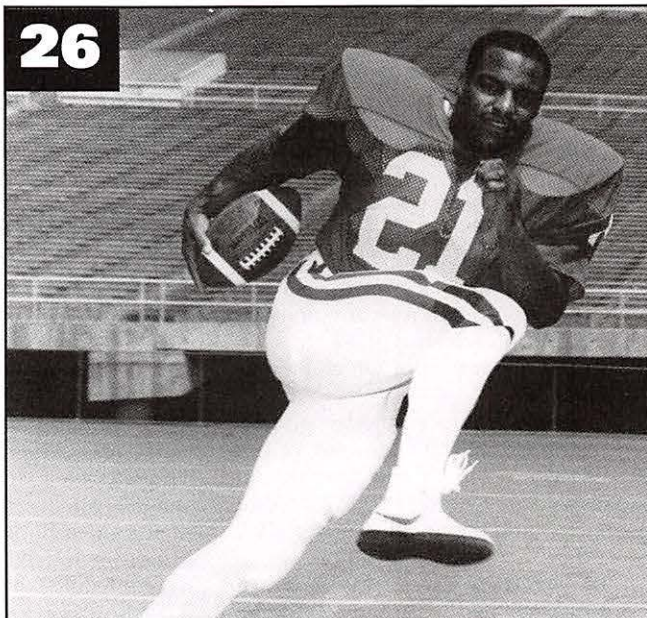
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Tough Lessons

At a critical juncture in Nebraska's 24-17 victory against Miami in the 1995 Orange Bowl game, Christian Peter held his anger in check after being shoved by a Hurricane.

Ordinarily, the Cornhusker defensive tackle was inclined to retaliate in such situations. But that time he didn't. He kept his arms at his side, earning the Miami player a 15-yard penalty.

Sometimes the best response is none at all. That's a lesson Richie Incognito has learned.

"If we want to win Big 12 championships and national championships, we've got to eliminate all the little things," the sophomore offensive tackle said at Nebraska's early-August media day.

"That's something we can control. So I took it upon myself to eliminate that."

Incognito didn't always maintain control in heated competition as a red-shirted freshman. In the frustration of the embarrassment at Penn State, for example, he was ejected for fighting.

Looking back now, he realizes "how much those penalties hurt us," he said.

He hasn't lost the intensity that helped earn him freshman All-America recognition. But he has toned it down, gotten it under control. "I've grown up a little bit. I understand that now," he said.

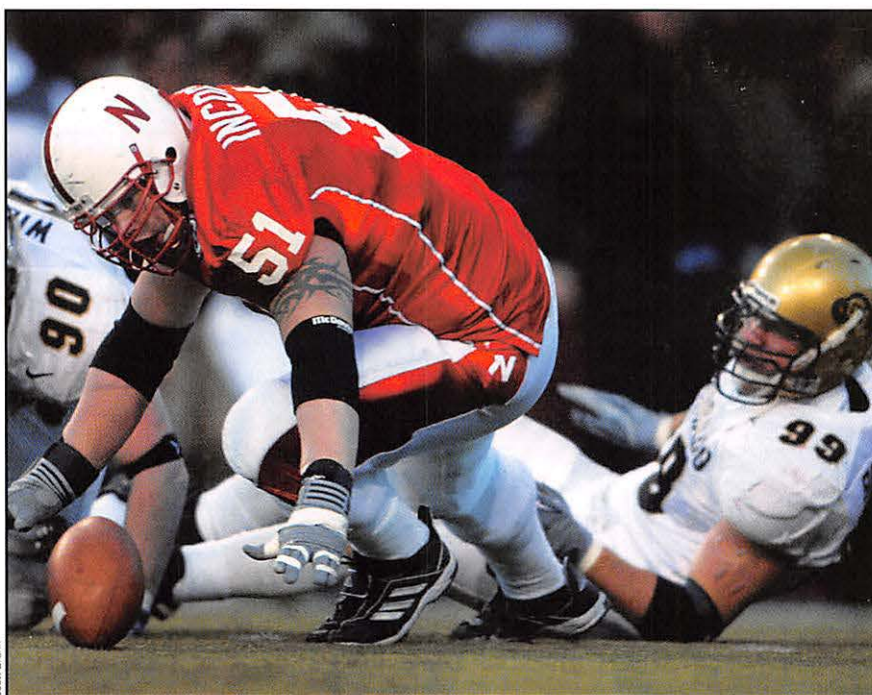
Incognito was Nebraska's most dominating lineman in his first season, finishing with 171 knockdown blocks, the second-highest total in school history — behind Toniui Fonoti's 201 in 2001.

He was the first freshman lineman to start an opener and only the third lineman to start any game as a freshman, joining Rob Zatechka (1991) and Dominic Raiola (1998).

But his first season also had a stormy side, like the ejection at Penn State and subsequent rejection of interview requests, which carried through the spring — for part of which he was suspended.

On media day, he seemed as gregarious as he was at the beginning of last season, when "I just wanted my face in the paper. I was young and I wanted to be all over the paper, all over the TV," he said.

His eagerness to see his name in print also created a problem after he



Richie Incognito started 13 games and earned freshman All-America recognition.

spoke his mind before the Arizona State game. Even though he went to high school in Glendale, Ariz., the Sun Devils didn't show much interest in recruiting him. That experience, and advice from sports information director Chris Anderson, taught him "I can't really say what's on my mind," he said.

"I have to take a moment and think about what I'm about to say."

Lifting the interview ban was his decision. "I figured it was time," said Incognito, who has been included on the 2003 Outland Trophy Watch List. "I felt like starting a whole new page."

Briefly last spring it appeared he would be turning a page on positions, moving from left tackle, where he started 13 games, to center, to replace John Garrison. But the emergence of walk-on Josh Sewell, a transfer from Indiana State, enabled him to remain at tackle, the position he prefers.

Even so, "I'd play anywhere," he said. "It doesn't really matter to me."

He was about the only Cornhusker who attracted attention in preseason annuals. Street & Smith's accorded him All-America honorable mention while Athlon included him on its All-Big 12 second team.

So how good can he be? He consid-

ered that question before answering.

"Who knows?" he replied. "I'm just going to play my best, play my hardest and see what happens, let everything happen as it does. I don't feel pressure. I really don't read papers during the season."

"I don't get into all the hype. It's great for the fans. But it just ruins players."

His words would seem to indicate he has learned last season's tough lessons well.

Even though he is only a sophomore, "when I'm out there on the field I don't feel like a young guy," Incognito said. "I feel a lot more mature, kind of like a leader."

"A year of maturity, going through that 7-7 season, teaches a lot of good lessons."

Coach Frank Solich offered a media day estimate of his potential.

"I think you'll see Richie have a great year," said Solich. "He's ready to go physically. He's excited about this season, and we're excited about Richie this season."

Some of that excitement is based on the year of maturity.

"It's a part of growing up and learning the game," Incognito said. ■

CROUCH SAYS GOOD-BYE

In mid-July, before the start of the Green Bay Packers' training camp for newcomers, an Omaha World-Herald story described Eric Crouch as "energized and ambitious."

Nebraska's third Heisman Trophy winner and third-round draft pick of the St. Louis Rams a year ago was preparing to go to the Packer camp, with an opportunity to play quarterback.

Less than two weeks later, after two days in camp, Crouch was back in Omaha, considering his future and answering questions about why he passed on the second chance the Packers offered.

There is no simple answer, of course. Such decisions are much more complex than most of us are willing to acknowledge. We want tidy explanations, exclusive of personal considerations, which is why fan reaction to Crouch was immediately divided, with some regarding him as a quitter.

The talk in April was that Crouch would go to the Canadian Football League and play quarterback. But the Packers claimed him off reserve-retired waivers, and offered him an opportunity to develop as a quarterback while possibly contributing on special teams, as a kick returner.



Eric Crouch

Playing quarterback in the near future was a longshot. Crouch went to camp as the fifth quarterback on the depth chart, behind Brett Favre, Doug Pederson, Craig Nall and Akili Smith.

After two days of practice with first-year players, the likely scenario was that Crouch would be relegated to the practice squad and at some point, be sent to NFL Europe, where he could adapt the skills that earned him the Heisman Trophy as an option quarterback to the pro style.

Crouch didn't distinguish himself as a kick returner. The practice squad wasn't appealing and neither was the European league, requiring an extended absence from his wife and daughter.

Crouch spent only slightly more time the previous summer in training camp with the Rams, who planned to turn him into a wide receiver. But he wasn't comfortable making the switch.

That anyone would label Crouch as a quitter boggles the mind given his accomplishments at Nebraska. Success or failure in the NFL has no correlation to a college career culminating in a Heisman Trophy and an extensive revision of the offensive section of the Cornhuskers record book.

Crouch's accomplishments at Nebraska haven't been diminished in the least because of his decision to pass on the NFL twice, any more than, say, Barry Sanders' extraordinary achievements as a running back with the Detroit Lions should be undercut by his walking away from the NFL early.

Such decisions should be taken in their proper context. ■

Quick Hits

What's Happening In Nebraska Athletics?

WEIGHTY MATTERS

Steve Pederson's restructuring of the athletic department included the strength and conditioning program, with the promotion of Boyd Epley to Associate Director for Performance and Facility Development. Although Epley's focus is now as a fund-raiser, working with Pederson, he continues to oversee the athletic performance staff, budget and facilities.

Bryan Bailey, in his 16th year in the strength and conditioning program, is now the head strength coach for football, with Mike Arthur the director of performance, responsible for the Cornhuskers' 22 other intercollegiate sports for men and women. Arthur is in his 26th year at Nebraska.

Solich picked Bailey, who has been the coordinator of research since 2000, to be responsible for all aspects of the football team's strength and conditioning program. Previously, four assistants handled those responsibilities for the football team, under Epley's direction.

Epley established Nebraska's strength and conditioning program in 1970.

TALENTED TRIO

Former Nebraska men's basketball coach Danny Nee might have had his critics. But he recruited some outstanding players for the program. Eric Strickland, Tyrone Lue and Eric Piatkowski are still playing in the NBA and signed million-dollar contracts as free agents in July.

Strickland was the first to move to a new team, leaving Indiana for Milwaukee. Lue went from Washington to Orlando, Piatkowski from the Los Angeles Clippers to Houston.

During nine seasons in Los Angeles, Piatkowski became the leading 3-point shooter in Clippers' history. He hit just under 40 percent from 3-point range last season. He signed a three-year deal with Houston, worth a reported \$8 million.

HOOP-T-DO

Speaking of recruiting, Nebraska men's basketball coach Barry Collier filled out his 2003 recruiting class in late July with the addition of James Reynolds, a 6-foot-2, 190-pound guard from Crenshaw High School in Los Angeles. Reynolds averaged 18.5 points as a senior for a 20-6 team.

Reynolds joins junior college transfer Marcus Neal (6-0) and freshmen Charles Richardson (5-8) and Shuan Stegall (6-6) as the newcomers on a Cornhusker team with 11 returning letterwinners — including four starters.

Marcus McCarty, a former scholarship recruit and two-year letterman, has signed a medical waiver and will no longer be eligible to compete, while retaining his scholarship.

JOE SAYS IT'S SO

The men's basketball team also apparently has the first member of its 2004 class, 6-foot-5, 194-pound, forward-guard Joe McCray from Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

McCray, whom ESPN.com rates among the nation's top 100 recruits, averaged 16 points for a Dillard High School team that finished with a 33-1 record and won a fourth consecutive large-schools state championship.

McCray is expected to attend a prep school in North Carolina this year before enrolling at Nebraska. Connecticut and Alabama were among other schools contacting McCray. McCray is expected to sign a letter of intent in November.

STAFF SHUFFLE

Coach Frank Solich's football staff wasn't the only one restructured during the off-season. Women's basketball coach Connie Yori had to replace two assistants and a director of operations. The new assistants are Cindy Fisher, the head coach at Wyoming the past five years and former recruiting coordinator at Old Dominion, and LaKale Malone. The new director of operations is Aubrey Elbin.

They replaced Amy Stephens, John Filar and Micah Parker.

Men's basketball coach Barry Collier also hired a new assistant, Scott Spinelli. Spinelli, who spent the past two years at Loyola of Chicago and has been a scout for the NBA's Philadelphia 76ers, wasted no time in having an impact in recruiting. He was reportedly a key factor in Nebraska's receiving the oral commitment from McCray.

DOUBLE PLAY

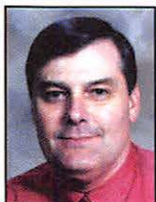
The term "student-athlete" certainly applied to Laura Pilakowski and Jeff Leise. The now-former Cornhuskers were selected as the 2003 Female and Male Big 12 Sportspersons of the Year in a vote of conference administrators and media covering the conference. It was the first time in the three-year history of the awards that both went to student-athletes from the same school.

Pilakowski was a Big 12 co-volleyball Player of the Year and a second-team AVCA All-American, as well as a part-time starter on the basketball team. She also was a three-time Verizon/CoSIDA Academic All-American, earning first-team recognition in 2002.

Leise was a three-time, All-Big 12 selection in baseball and a two-time Academic All-American, turning down a major league draft opportunity following his junior season. ■

'He Wants To Lead'

The difference will be more than a season's maturity



**Mike
BABCOCK**

FRANK SOLICH WAS LESS THAN enthusiastic about attending the Big 12's annual media day in Kansas City at the end of July. Kansas State's Bill Snyder skipped it entirely, begging off because the Wildcats open the season on Aug. 23 and he was in the midst of preparations, he said.

It would have taken him a good half-hour to get to Kansas City on some Kansas State booster's corporate jet and then he would have had to get to the site, talk to reporters, and, well, you get the idea. It's a big hassle to make yourself available in person when you can do so by videoconference.

So Snyder was the bane of conference-area media representatives and the envy of conference coaches. "Hardly anybody wants to run down to Kansas City for media day," Solich said a week later.

Jammal Lord was a notable exception, however. He wanted to go to Kansas City, and not just because everything's up-to-date there or because they've got some crazy little women there.

"He wanted to lead the pack," said Solich. "He couldn't wait to get down there."

Solich wasn't speaking without justification. "I think a lot of that comes from him wanting to display himself as a leader on this football team," he said of the Cornhuskers' senior quarterback.

"And if you look around the country at what quarterbacks do, first-year quarterbacks versus what they do the next go-around, usually what you see is . . . a much more polished quarterback."

Lord is, for all intents and purposes, a second-year quarterback, even though he is a senior. And in his case, the difference will be more than a season's maturity. During the off-season, he spent time in the football offices at South Stadium, "studying film, looking at playbooks, looking at opponents, just doing the things that are necessary if you're going to be a great quarterback," Solich said.

Lord did those things on his own; coaches can't require such off-season dedication.

Some would question juxtaposing "great" with quarterback in describing Lord, which is an unfortunate assessment, based in large part on his completion percentage and, of course, on the disaster that was last season. Lord completed 95-of-204 passes, 46.6 percent, with 12 interceptions.

But Tommie Frazier didn't exactly distinguish himself as a passer until his senior season, completing 44 percent as a freshman, 47.5 percent as a sophomore and 43.1 percent

as a junior, when he was sidelined by a blood-clot problem. As a senior, he completed 56.4 percent of his passes.

And Eric Crouch's completion percentage hovered around 50 during his first three seasons. Like Frazier, he was considerably more efficient as a senior, completing 55.6 percent.

Statistics won't win an argument in Lord's favor, however. If they could, there wouldn't be much of an argument. After all, he rushed for a quarterback school-record 1,412 yards.

Even so, his detractors have been ready to hand the job to Joe Dailey as soon as the freshman from Jersey City, N.J., signed a letter of intent, ignoring junior Mike Stuntz in the process.

The new guy, the unknown quantity, always seems to get support based on high school performance and test scores. That isn't meant to diminish Dailey's considerable potential. He's the "real deal," sophomore wide receiver Ross Pilkington said a couple of days into preseason camp.

Solich said Dailey would be given an opportunity to compete for the starting job, as would Stuntz. "We will put the guys on the field that are getting the job done," he said.

But Lord has earned the job. He "kept himself on the field, took shot after shot, came back play after play, made some big plays in the passing game, to the point where you feel he has the ability to develop into a very good thrower," said Solich. "But he needs help. He needs some protection."

"Those are things we're going to offer our quarterback this year."

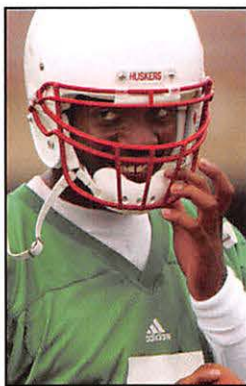
Despite the frustrations of last season, Lord hasn't lost confidence, quite the contrary.

"Just over the summer you've seen his confidence rise," Pilkington said. "He's looking a lot better this year than he did at the end of last year. So his confidence is definitely high right now."

As someone who catches what Lord throws, Pilkington's opinion is meaningful.

"His arm is there. It's mostly timing right now. That's for all of us, not just Jammal," said Pilkington. "We've all got to work on getting that three-step timing down. It's not just him"

At game's end, Lord can only be as good as those around him. If they're good, he'll be great. He has the ability. ■



Jammal Lord rushed for 1,412 yards last season.

Mike Babcock is a former sports columnist for the Lincoln Journal Star. He has covered Nebraska football for more than 20 years. Mike can be reached at MBABCOCK1@neb.rr.com or P.O. Box 6782, Lincoln, NE 68506.



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Similar Situation

Texas Coach Brown understands the pressure Solich faces at Nebraska



Curt McKEEVER

JUST LIKE HE FELT after calling Frank Solich his hero during Nebraska's trying football season of 2002, Texas Coach Mack Brown believes people should lighten up when it comes to judging the leader of the Huskers' program.

"I was cutting up last year when I said Frank's my hero, because he has to put up with all the stuff I did," Brown said recently. "People made a huge to-do about that, but

here's a guy who spent his whole life not taking over jobs because he loves Nebraska football."

Solich enters his sixth season having guided NU to 49 wins in 65 games. Only five others in Division I-A history — Barry Switzer (at Oklahoma), John Robinson (USC), R.C. Slocum (Texas A&M), and Lloyd Carr (Michigan) — won as many games in their first five seasons. Ironically, all found the hot seat that Solich now supposedly sits on following last fall's 7-7 campaign and eventually were replaced.

Brown, a close confidant of Solich's, believes there are fewer than 10 schools in the country where a coach can easily become a scapegoat if his team wins fewer than nine or 10 games a season.

He and Solich, head two of those programs.

"When you're following Coach (Darrell) Royal 30-something years ago, you're still following Coach Royal," said Brown, the only active Division I-A coach to have led his team to at least nine wins in each of the last seven seasons. "And whether Frank was the coach, or somebody else, they're still going to follow Coach (Tom) Osborne for 30 years. 'People say, 'Is that fair?' It doesn't matter if it's fair or not, it's what you've got. And it's not going to change."

"People, in some cases, didn't give Frank credit for the 42-9 (record), which I believe was the best five-year start of any new coach in college football history, so Frank's going to be back."

In his first five seasons, Solich had a national-championship caliber club (in 1999) and another team (2001) that played for the title. But after last season, he replaced six assistants and relinquished his role as offensive coordinator.

He denies the moves were made out of desperation, and Brown would concur.

"They lost some great coaches who traditionally have been there, but this is Frank's staff, and it's time for him to go with kind of a new philosophy and a new direction," Brown said. "He'll have a lot of excitement. I'm glad we're not playing them early because they're going to come out of there ready to go. There's a tremendous pride for those players and coaches at that place."

Slocum — who was replaced after last season despite compiling a 123-47-2 record that included four conference championships in 14 seasons — also has faith in Solich. And

he doesn't think the so-called added pressure will have any bearing on how Solich will respond in tight quarters.

"Coaches do a great job of tuning out distractions, and you're always faced with it," said Slocum, who is beginning a stint as a Big 12 Conference television studio analyst for Fox Sports Net. "If you've had a great season, you have the distraction of everybody thinking you were great. If you've had a poor season, you've got people, naysayers, saying whatever they say. You're always dealing with some form of that, so you get pretty adept at just tuning it out (and) try to control those things that you can control. That's your team and your coaches."

"You can rest assured he's as motivated as anybody in the state of Nebraska for them to have a good season. I'm sure there will be excitement with the new staff. The anticipation of not really being sure of how good you're going to be, there's the excitement about that and an energy that comes from that. They've got a great tradition. Frank has been involved in that tradition for a long time. He understands the expectations of a program like Nebraska. He knows what he's into."

Indeed, Solich admits there are some parallels from how he felt coming into his second year at Nebraska and this season. And after going 9-4 in his rookie campaign — a record that left Nebraska with its first four-loss season since 1968, the Huskers answered by going 12-1 and avenging their only loss of the year to Texas.

Solich has similar intentions for 2003.

"The biggest lesson I had reinforced (last season) was to make sure you take each day at a time, get up in the morning to prepare yourself to coach the very best you can, work extremely hard at maximizing the abilities of your players, continue to work on chemistry within your staff,

make sure the chemistry within your team is what you're after, and then have the ability to move forward when times are very, very difficult," he said. "In this profession, you get faced with very, very difficult times, but if you don't have the ability to throw them aside, you're just going to dig yourself into a hole, and you're going to have trouble coming out of it."

Obviously, Solich wants nothing but for Nebraska to be back on top. And his desire is a lot more than just wishful thinking.

"I'm very confident in myself as a football coach, and what happens, happens," he said. "All I can control is waking up every morning and coaching the best I can, looking at my players, our coaches, seeing how they're reacting. And if they're reacting in a way that's going to give us our best chance of winning football games, then I'm going to feel OK about some things." ■



Mack Brown is beginning his sixth season at Texas.

Curt McKeever is a sportswriter, covering the University of Nebraska for the Lincoln Journal Star. In addition to reporting on football he is the primary beat writer for the men's basketball and baseball teams.

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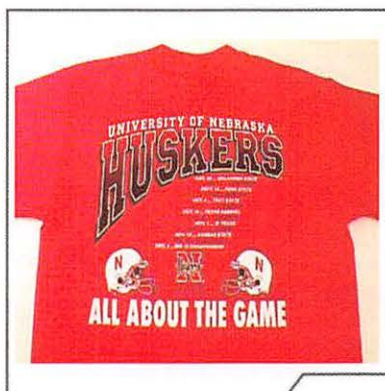
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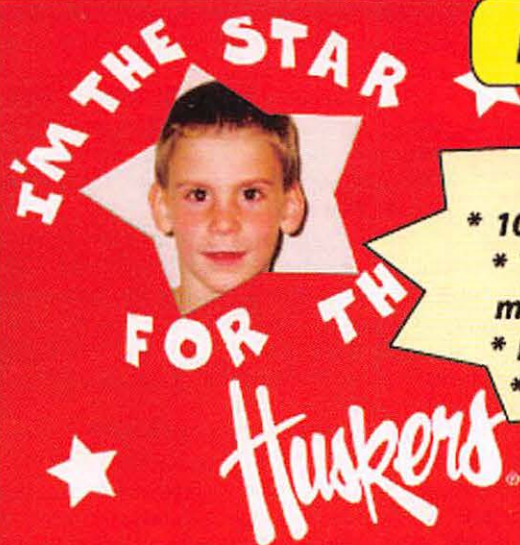
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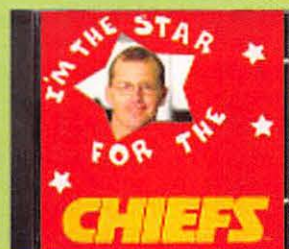
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Early Surprises?

Nebraska, Oklahoma State will both need to make adjustments in key conference opener



Terry DOUGLASS

THE DEBATE over which team has the advantage in the season opener between Nebraska and Oklahoma State was a popular topic at the Big 12 Conference media days.

As the teams met with the media to discuss the upcoming season, arguments favoring both sides were compelling.

Oklahoma State's program appears to be on an upward swing and likely will be ranked in the top 25 by both major polls heading into the nationally televised game at Memorial Stadium. The Cowboys beat Nebraska 24-21 in Stillwater last season — their first win over the Cornhuskers since 1961 — and have won six of their last seven games.

OSU has all the pieces in place offensively. The lineup features Big 12 preseason offensive player of the year Rashaun Woods at wide receiver, along with proven stand-outs in quarterback Josh Fields and running back Tatum Bell.

On the other side, Nebraska finished last season 7-7 and dropped its last three games. The advantages for the Huskers are that the game will be played in Lincoln and Nebraska has new coordinators on both sides of the ball.

Coach Frank Solich and his staff are hoping that the element of surprise might give NU the edge. While he contends that new schemes won't win the game, Solich and his players are tight-lipped when it comes to discussing new wrinkles.

"I'm a very competitive person, but I'm not going to just throw out to them what we're going to be doing," Solich said. "It makes sense to me that we try to have as much of an advantage, with a new offensive coordinator and a new defensive coordinator, as possible."

Whatever alignments or schemes Nebraska eventually does show probably won't come as a total surprise to the Cowboys.

"This is a very competitive business," Solich said. "Oklahoma State is not going to just show up and see what happens."

Indeed, Coach Les Miles said Oklahoma State has attempted to piece together a picture of what it might see from Nebraska by watching old game tape from the two new Husker coordinators' previous teams. Barney Cotton was the offensive coordinator at New Mexico State last season, while Bo Pelini was the linebackers coach for the Green Bay Packers.

"There are hints and places to look where you might get a feel for them, offensively, defensively and in special teams," Miles said. "The proof is when the play is called and what defense or offense they call will then predict much more regularly, how they'll play."

"We have to prepare for Nebraska, but I think you'll find that there are some adjustments come game time that we should be pretty comfortable making in our third year."

However, Nebraska might not be the only team to throw in a few new twists.

"We have had to make adjustments both offensively and defensively, according to some shifts in personnel," Miles said. "There will be some adjustments that Nebraska will not be able to anticipate."

Nebraska defensive end Trevor Johnson said he's hoping the thing OSU will be most surprised by is not the new schemes but the way the Huskers play the game.

"The real element of surprise is going to be them seeing how physical we're going to be and how much faster we're going to be," Johnson said. "I think that's going to be the biggest surprise."

While both teams would undoubtedly like to ease into their schedule, playing a key conference game in the opener does have its benefits.

"I feel a big sense of urgency to get ready for these guys because this is a tough first game, especially in Lincoln,"

Woods said. "We're going to have to get our timing down and get everything down — learn the plays, get the freshmen ready and just get prepared as much as we can because it's not far off."

"It's definitely a big game for us."

The contest could have equal importance this year for a Nebraska team that desperately needs a confidence boost heading into the season. The Huskers start the year with a three-game losing streak after suffering through the program's worst season since 1961.

Some Nebraska players say they actually view this season as a bit of a revenge tour, as six opponents who beat the Huskers last year are on the 2003 regular season schedule. Oklahoma State is just the first in line.

"Every game this year for us is going to be crucial," quarterback Jammal Lord said. "To have the

Cowboys playing at our home . . . that's a must-win game for us. We have to win it."

While Johnson isn't placing special emphasis on the Oklahoma State game, he definitely expects the Huskers to be revved up for the contest.

"We definitely want to play very well against them," Johnson said. "They've got a very explosive offense, a great quarterback, a great wide receiver and a great running back in Tatum Bell. We're definitely going to have to ready for them."

With the media already helping to build the anticipation for the Nebraska-OSU battle, Miles said it's essential to keep the importance of the game in perspective.

"We're going to play our football," Miles said. "We're not going to be tight. We look forward to that challenge."

Solich shares a similar view. He appeared to be taken aback when a reporter asked if this year's season opener was the biggest in Nebraska football history.

"I'd say that is incorrect," Solich said. "I will say that it is a very big game." ■



Les Miles has led the Cowboys to six wins in their last seven games.

Terry Douglass is the sports editor of the Grand Island Independent. He can be reached at tdbbdouglass@netzero.net.



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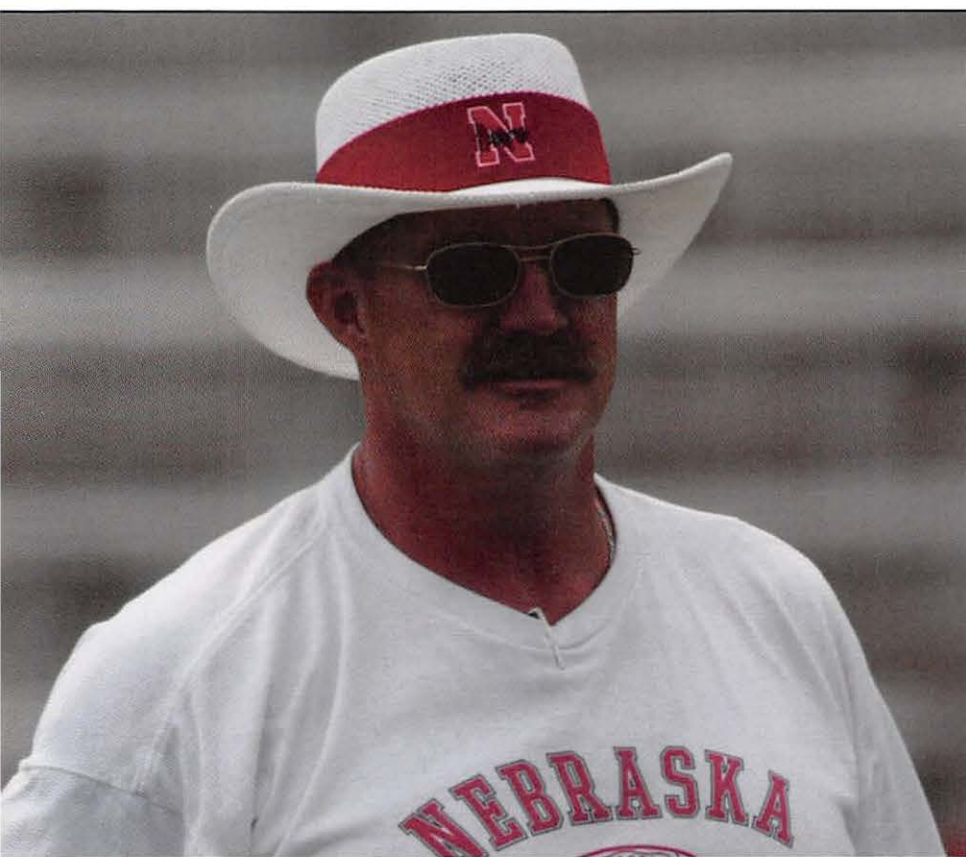


THE ONLINE LEADER IN COLLEGE SPORTS

A Few New Twists

*'We're not going to try
to reinvent the wheel'*

**By Mike Babcock
Photos by Scott Bruhn**



Barney Cotton is trying to bring unpredictability to the offense.

Bob Devaney always claimed that the first play from scrimmage in his first game as head coach at Nebraska

drew a standing ovation from a crowd of about 27,000 at Memorial Stadium.

The play, he said, was a bootleg pass, which fell incomplete.

Devaney might have altered the reality of that first play for his own purposes. But as with many of his stories, that one contained an element of truth, even if it didn't happen the way he said it did. Certainly, Cornhusker fans had grown weary of the ground-bound offense of his predecessor.

For the record, Devaney's first team threw, on average, fewer than two passes more per game than Nebraska had the previous season. But perception was everything. And in that case, the perception depended on the difference between a 3-6-1 record in 1961 and a 9-2 record in 1962.

That bit of history probably has some small application to the present, as Frank Solich goes into his sixth season as head coach with a restructured staff, including a new offensive coordinator.

Barney Cotton, who has been charged with reshaping the offense, was asked on media day if he had settled on a first play from scrimmage in the opener against Oklahoma State.

"I think people other than myself spend a lot more time thinking about that first play," he said. "It really boils down to wherever we get the ball on the field. I mean, that first play may change just by whether we get it first, if we get it deep, if we get it in the middle of the field."

"That's going to dictate what we're going to do on the first play of the game."

Because of all the possibilities, he'll have "two or three choices," he said.

If you were to take a random sampling of Cornhusker fans, the odds are a majority would favor a pass play, regardless of where on Memorial Stadium's FieldTurf that first series begins.

Though practices from the spring on have been conducted in relative secrecy, many fans have imagined that Cotton has brought with him from New Mexico State a propensity to pass.

Solich might have encouraged such imagining with comments that probably have been misinterpreted. "It's obvious from the offensive side of it, we have to throw the ball better," he said during the same early-August news conference. Note, he said throw the ball "better" not "more."

As was the case with Tom Osborne before him, whether or not Solich sanctions the calling of more pass plays than in the recent past will depend on how efficiently the passes are thrown.

The line of demarcation is 55 percent, "plus," said Solich. "Ideally, you'd like to have it closer to 60 percent. But if we're throwing the ball and completing 55 percent of our passes, we're going to be a very effective throwing team. We'd like to throw a little more. But don't think that we're not going to run Nebraska football. We will run the football. We will slam it at people."

Lest there be any doubt about that, he repeated "slam it at people" twice.

"But we'll also try to mix in passes a little bit more," he said.

The Cornhuskers didn't pass efficiently last season, which helps to explain why they ran the ball three-fourths of the time. Quarterback Jammal Lord threw all but 31 of



New defensive coordinator Bo Pelini has set about restoring the reputation of the Cornhusker Blackshirts.



"We'd like to throw a little more. But don't think that we're not going to run Nebraska football. We will run the football. We will slam it at people."

— Frank Solich

PRESEASON NOTES

Notes and Quotes from Nebraska's Fall Camp

THIRD, WOULD YOU BELIEVE

Nebraska isn't getting much respect in the Big 12, which is understandable given last season's 3-5 conference record and fourth-place finish in the North Division. The Cornhuskers were third in the North in a preseason poll of conference-area media representatives, behind Kansas State and Colorado.

Sophomore offensive tackle Richie Incognito was the only Cornhusker on the preseason all-conference team. Oklahoma State wide receiver Rashaun Woods was picked as the outstanding offensive player, while Oklahoma linebacker Teddy Lehman was the outstanding defensive player.

Sooner defensive back Donte Nicholson was selected as the top newcomer.

North: Kansas State, Colorado, Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa State, Kansas.

South: Oklahoma, Texas, Oklahoma State, Texas A&M, Texas Tech, Baylor.

WATCH OUT FOR JAMMAL

Jammal Lord is among 42 quarterbacks named to the preseason watch list for the 2003 Davey O'Brien National Quarterback Award, given to the nation's top collegiate quarterback.

HORNE IS BIGGER

I-back David Horne reported for fall camp weighing 200 pounds, 5 more than he weighed when he was taken out of a redshirt five games into last season and about 10 more than he weighed when the team traveled to the Independence Bowl. The additional weight is a positive.

"With a few pounds on me, I know I can run with the best of them, in between the tackles," says Horne. "I can get hit by a 260-, 270-pounder, get up and run the next play, do it all over again."

JUST LIKE DENNY'S

Running backs coach Tim Albin, who worked with the tight ends as a graduate assistant last season, offers an assessment of sophomore tight end Matt Herian's unique ability with a comparison he first used to describe former Cornhusker tight end Tracey Wistrom. "He was like a Denny's Restaurant: 24 hours a day, seven days a week, he was always open." And the same is true of Herian.

LIST OF 105

Scholarship players Ronnie Smith, a wide receiver, and Grant Miller, a fullback, were not included on the list of 105 who could report for preseason practice and play in the opener. Both have been hampered by injuries, Coach Frank Solich said. Plus, the list had to be based on need.

Nebraska is particularly well stocked at fullback.

RECRUITING CLASS

Offensive lineman Darren DeLone, a junior college transfer, was late in arriving for fall camp because of having to finish some schoolwork. Steve Craver, a defensive back and the brother of former Cornhusker All-American Keyuo Craver, enrolled in a junior college to resolve some academic issues.

The other members of the class went through strength and conditioning tests on the first day of practice. Brandon Teamer, Bo Ruud, Andy Birkel and Tierre Green all scored more than 2,000 points on the performance index, determined by factoring an athlete's size with test scores.

The top finishers:

Performance Index: Teamer, DL, 2,110 points; Ruud, LB, 2,083; Birkel, WR, 2,006; Green, LB, 2,004

10-yard dash: Birkel, 1.60 seconds; Green, 1.64; Ruud, 1.64; Donald DeFrاند, DB, 1.65

40-yard dash: Birkel, 4.57 seconds; Green, 4.64; Titus Brothers, DB, 4.70

Vertical jump: Ruud, 34 inches; Birkel, 33; Green, 32; DeFrاند, 32; Teamer, 32

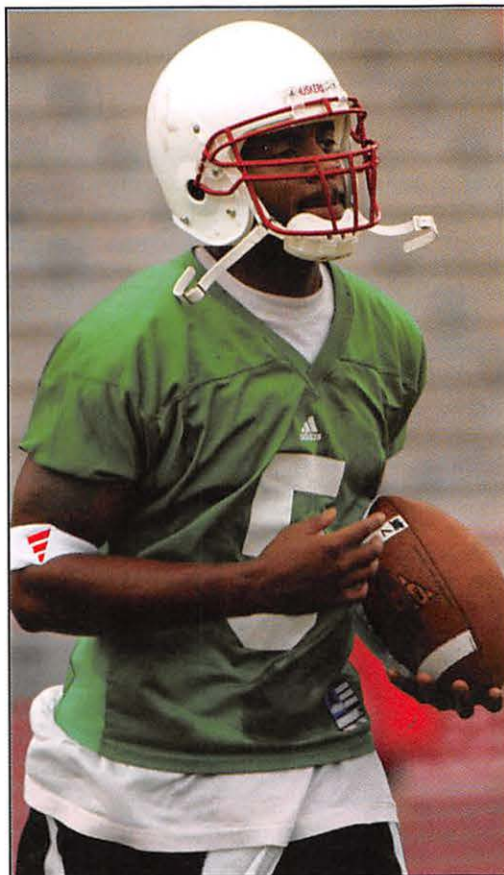
OOPS

Selected newcomers were available to reporters for interviews following the first three days of fall camp. A television reporter asked Green, who was substituted for quarterback Joe Dailey, how much he had talked to his "brother" in preparation for his freshman season. Former Cornhusker Ahman Green, now a top running back in the NFL with the Green Bay Packers, is Tierre's first cousin.

Even though he plays I-back, wears a No. 30 jersey and "I guess some of the things I do can be compared to what Ahman does," Tierre says, "I try not to model myself after one person."

His uncle, Mike Green, was a running back at Nebraska in the late 1960s.

Tierre was recruited as an athlete but wanted to play I-back all along. ■



Jammal Lord, Nebraska's leading rusher with 1,412 yards and 8 touchdowns, passed for 1,362 yards and 12 touchdowns.

Nebraska's 235 passes, completing 46.6 percent, for 1,362 yards and 12 touchdowns. He also was intercepted 12 times.

Lord, however, shouldn't have to shoulder the entire burden of that inefficiency. Nebraska has to "protect better, and in general, we need better offensive line play," Solich said.

The Cornhuskers also "need more production out of the I-backs."

Although Nebraska ranked fourth nationally in rushing offense, it averaged only 268.7 yards per game on the ground. Only? The average was the third-lowest since 1976.

The lowest was in 1998 (253.8), the second-lowest in 1999 (265.9).

Cotton, like Solich, has made no claim that there will be more passes in 2003. "We're not going to try to reinvent the wheel," he said. "We're just going to try to inject a few new twists."

Those twists will involve unpredictability, forcing opponents to "defend us the full football field, defend us honestly on each down,"

he said. "That's where the passing game will, hopefully, come in to help us. I think it's a pretty proven fact that when you throw the ball on running downs, you have probably a greater chance to complete more balls than throwing on passing downs."

"Even an NFL team isn't going to complete more than 35 percent on third-and-long."

Cotton, who played offensive and defensive line at Nebraska in the late 1970s, has been a little surprised by the fan interest — in some cases obsession — with passing.

"Passing's just part of the game, to be honest with you," he said. "I think fans are more concerned about how many times you're going to do it. They are enamored with it. I don't necessarily really understand because they've been so successful here running the football."

While Cotton has tried to bring unpredictability to the offense, new defensive coordinator Bo Pelini has set about restoring the reputation of the Cornhusker Blackshirts. The defense took a big hit in 2003 as well, allowing more points on the average than any season since the late 1950s.

"We just need to be a better-coordinated defense, and I think that will help us in a lot of ways," said Solich, who has been able to spend time in practice with the defense after yielding the coordinator's job to Cotton. For starters, "tackling is always something you want to work on, improve on."

"We feel we've got talent on the defensive side of it. We have a football team that can run. We have a football team that will hit you. And so if you have them running to the right place, if you get them hitting the right people, you're going to stand a pretty good chance of getting something done."

Although this is his first coordinator's job, Pelini has the experience of nine NFL seasons. He approached things during those seasons "like I was coordinating," he said.

At the beginning of preseason practice, Pelini wouldn't be pinned down about when or how many black practice jerseys he would distribute. "I don't know," he said. "We'll see."

Those who stepped up during the

spring might have an edge, but it would depend on "who's going to perform now," Pelini said. "It's a now business. We all know that. I know that. The players know that. Whoever performs throughout camp, steps up and shows the leadership, the discipline to play good defense, the toughness, those are the guys that are going to line up on Aug. 30."

By then, the Blackshirts will be identified, at least for the time being — even that could change. But Cotton won't know what the first play will be until Nebraska gets the ball for the first time.

Solich gave the ball to the fullback on the first play from scrimmage of his first game as head coach and offensive coordinator in 1998, Cotton was told in hopes of eliciting a response. But he held firm. "We'll have two or three choices, depending on where we're lined up," he said.

If the Cornhuskers effect a turnaround from last season's 7-7 record, Cotton can look back years from now and claim that the first play was a pass, whether it was or not.

And even if it doesn't draw a standing ovation, it will earn a smattering of applause. ■

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'Let Things Go'

***Husker tackle
Vili Waldrop
has developed
an ability to
move on***

By Mike Babcock

Participants in Nebraska's 2002 Black Coaches Association Classic opener against Arizona State received a Microsoft Xbox video game system. Dan Vili Waldrop gave his to a cousin.

Not that he didn't want it. Rather, he already owned one. The senior offensive tackle is, by his own admission, addicted to video games, particularly the action, shoot-'em-up kind.

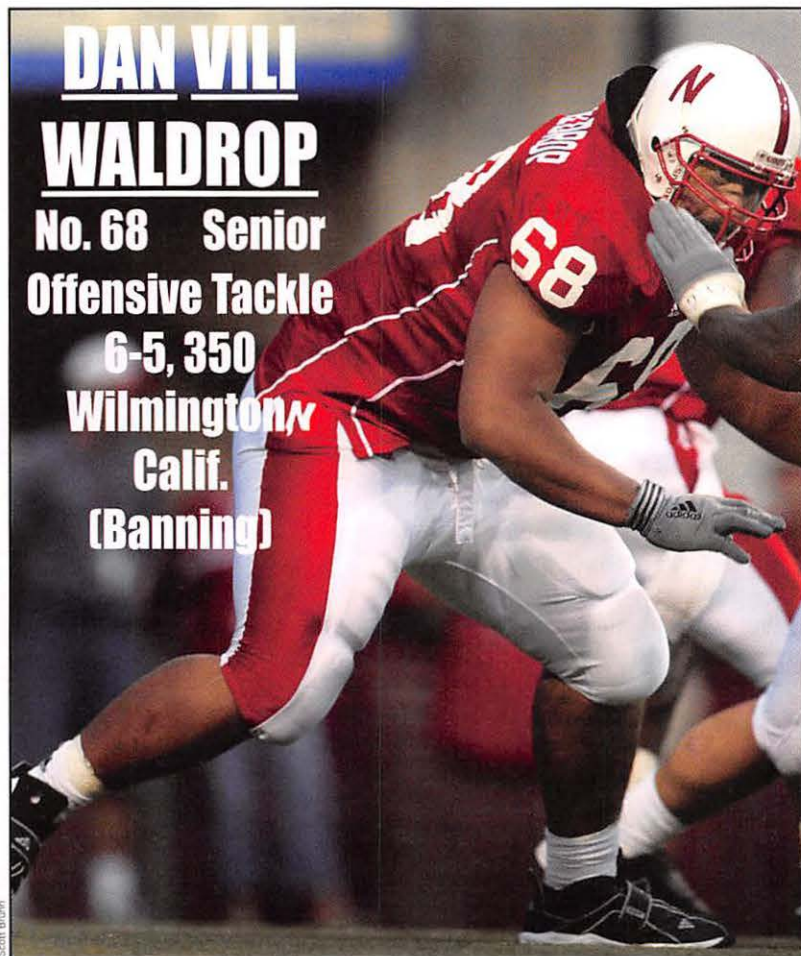
He has been playing video games since he was in high school, beginning with Super Mario on a Nintendo system that his grandfather gave him. He and his younger brother, who lives in the Los Angeles area, "got really good." They still play games against each other on-line.

When he and former Cornhusker Matt Shook shared an apartment, they would hook up game systems on two television sets, go on-line and play Socom — U.S. Navy Seals. They played the game for hours on end. "That's probably why I got a C in one of my classes," Vili Waldrop says.

His major is psychology, with a minor in ethnic studies. And he might pursue a master's degree in business psychology, either that or become a high school football coach. He and Taylor Gehman have talked about coaching together, in a "big" football state such as California or Texas.

They were in the same recruiting class. But Gehman's career was cut short by injury. They "hung out a lot" as freshmen, says Vili Waldrop. Now

**DAN VILI
WALDROP**
No. 68 Senior
Offensive Tackle
6-5, 350
Wilmington,
Calif.
(Banning)



Gehman "kind of does his own thing."

Other than football, Vili Waldrop's thing is video games in particular, and electronics in general. Besides the Xbox system, he has a Sony PlayStation2 and a Game Boy Advance SP, which he takes on road trips to pass the time. "I'm a big electronics person," he says.

His next major purchase will be an Apple iPod, MP3 player to replace his CD player, which is "too bulky" and requires carrying a supply of CDs. The iPod weighs just a few ounces and fits in the palms of his large hands. Yet he will be able to store several thousand songs on it — though

right now he doesn't have several thousand to store. His "play list" includes maybe a thousand.

Music appreciation classes have expanded his horizons. So he listens to Little Richard and the Beatles, as well as to Duke Ellington, Big Band stuff. Because of a jazz class, he got a Dizzy Gillespie CD. "It can't be rap and R&B forever," he says. "You've just got to let things go."

Vili Waldrop has developed an ability to let things go in life as well as in music. "It's personality. I'm a big adjuster. That's always been the case, move on or else," he says.

So when Barney Cotton replaced Milt Tenopir as his position coach, he

adjusted.

His ability to adjust has been tested in other, more difficult ways while he has been at Nebraska. Two years ago, one of his best friends died, and then last year, his grandfather died.

He lived with his grandparents on occasion growing up, for a time in Havelock, N.C. He even considered going to school there, but opted to return to California to begin junior high.

His grandfather was in the military, so his grandparents moved a lot, which meant he traveled on visits, to Virginia, Maryland, Washington, D.C., South Carolina, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama and Florida. His high school graduation present was a trip to visit them in Japan.

He spent the better part of two weeks in Japan, ducking through doors in "tiny" houses. That's not necessarily unique to Japan, however. Vili Waldrop is 6-foot-5 and 350 pounds.

Because of his size, he stands out in public. But he doesn't mind the attention. At times he enjoys it, in fact. He's a willing interview subject for reporters and among the most approachable players on the team. When he's out and about, he often catches people glancing at him.

Some will approach by name. His initial reaction is that he should know theirs, too. Occasionally a year ago, people would greet him on the street with "I thought you were with San Diego."

"I'm not Toniu (Fonoti)," he would reply. "I'm that other guy, the right tackle."

He can smile about being mistaken for Fonoti, an All-America guard who left early for the NFL's San Diego Chargers, just as he can smile about a mistake on the NCAA College Football 2002 video game. Though players can't be identified by name, they are identified by jersey number, and Nebraska's offensive right tackle, No. 68, appears to be Caucasian. Vili Waldrop is Samoan.

"Must be the climate," he says with a smile.

The death of his grandfather and more recently, the separation of his parents distracted him on the field as well as off. "My body was ready but my mind was messed up," he says. Not so now. He has come to grips with those personal problems and is focused on his final season at Nebraska.

Despite the problems, Vili Waldrop has been successful, starting at right tackle for two seasons and earning all-conference honorable mention in 2002. He is one of three returning starters in the offensive line. The others are left tackle Richie Incognito and left guard Mike Erickson.

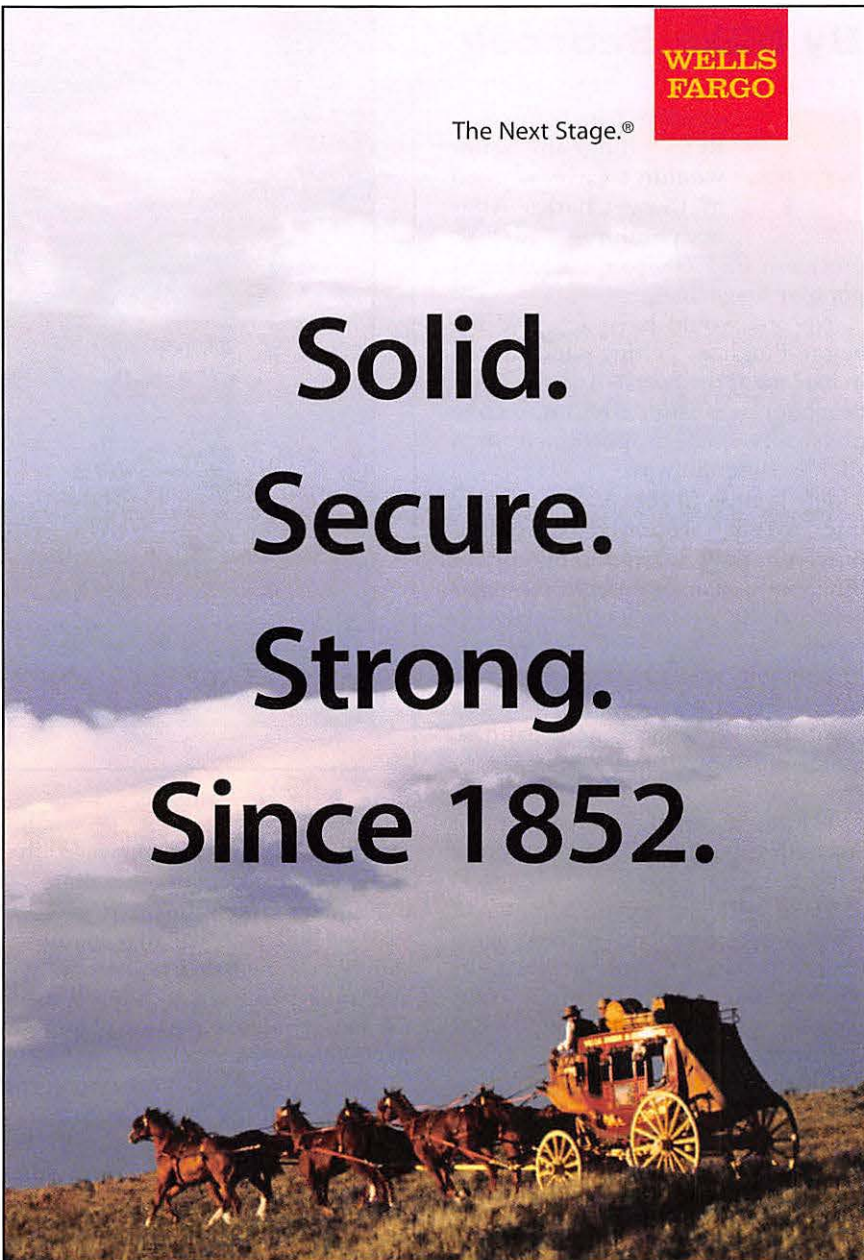
Vili Waldrop started working out three weeks before most of the rest of his teammates this summer, "getting ready, concentrating on football," he says. "I've never been as excited for a year as this one. I don't know why, but I'm extremely excited. No distractions this year."

After this season, if he doesn't continue playing at the next level, he'll

consider his options. He is scheduled to graduate in December and is engaged to be married next June — his fiancée, whom he has known since high school, is in California, working toward a teaching credential.

Vili Waldrop's first career choice would be to start a magazine for video game enthusiasts. That way, "you could just play video games all day," he says. "But you never know how to start it."

Former roommate Jake Andersen isn't surprised. "If you want to talk to a video game guy, talk to him," says Anderson. "Everybody on the team knows Dan's the video game master." ■



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Before And After

Bingham learns difference between body-building strength and football strength

By Mike Babcock

Ryon Bingham before and Ryon Bingham after wouldn't have worked in those Charles Atlas bodybuilding ads so prevalent in 1960s comic books and popular magazines.

No one would have accepted the before-Bingham getting sand kicked in his face at the beach. And the after-Bingham was similarly impressive physically, just proportioned in a slightly different way.

Jeff Jamrog, Nebraska's defensive line coach, recently compared Bingham now to a photograph of Bingham a year or so ago, provided by Bryan Bailey, the football strength coach.

Bingham was a big guy then, and he's even bigger now. More to the point, however, "he's more defined, more spread out, thicker upper body and legs," says Jamrog.

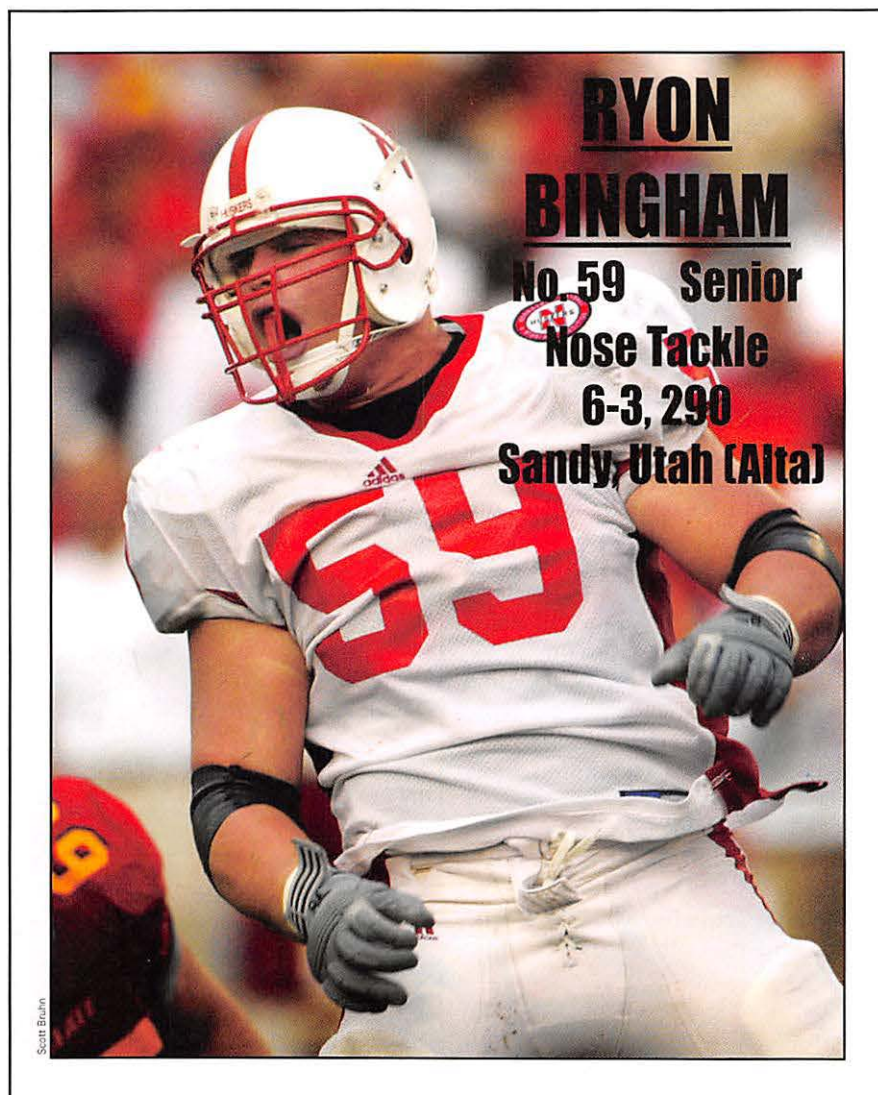
He has "more of a football type of strength instead of being a body builder."

Flash back to the late summer of 1999, when Bingham arrived as a freshman. His impressive physique, with well-defined traps, drew comparison to pro wrestling's Bill Goldberg.

Bingham didn't mind that. He was already a committed weight lifter, and his focus was being as strong as possible. "Plus, I wanted to look good," the senior nose tackle says.

"Before I came here, I worked more on my body-building strength."

Before he came to Nebraska, he



made no distinction between that and football strength. But there's a difference, a significant difference, and he had to learn that before he stepped on the field.

Proper pad level, technique, using the hands, all are part of playing in the defensive line.

"Some players that are strong still get blown off the ball," Jamrog says. "You see someone strong in the weight room, who may have some weight, that doesn't necessarily mean they're going to hold up at the line of scrimmage. You can be strong all you want, but if you have high pad level,

I don't care what you bench, what you squat or power clean, you're going to get knocked off the ball."

After redshirting, Bingham missed his second season because of a broken right foot. Then he converted his dedication in the weight room to becoming a defensive lineman. By his third season, he was alternating in a four-man rotation and last season, he started every game.

"Ryon is one of those guys that are very tough to move," says Jamrog. "I think if you ask our offensive linemen, when they try to double-team him, he's a tough one to block."

The media guide describes Bingham as "arguably Nebraska's hardest worker in the weight room," and that's supported by the fact that he's a four-time finalist for the lifter-of-the-year award.

But pumping iron isn't his only hobby these days. The last two years, as the result of encouragement from a friend back home in Sandy, Utah, he has taken up fly-fishing.

He's still a relative novice. He doesn't yet tie his own flies. But he has gained an appreciation of the sport, and is quick to acknowledge its difficulty. "It's really hard," he says.

"I haven't gotten it down yet, knowing what kind of flies are out there and then using the right flies, knowing how to lay down your line, whether you're doing wet fly-fishing or using a dry fly that stays on the top of the water, or using both. You have to have patience."

His commitment to fly-fishing, though probably not at the level of his weight lifting, is impressive. When he went home to Utah in May, he made the 20-minute drive to his favorite fishing spot every day for a month. Sometimes he was successful with the rainbows and browns, and sometimes not.

But he was undeterred. "I just like going, relaxing a bit, getting out in nature," he says.

In Lincoln, he relaxed in a different way. Every other week or so this summer, you might have found him in Best Buy, searching through the DVD titles, particularly comedies and horror films.

"I bought some old ones from my childhood," he says with a smile.

Among them were *Labyrinth* and *The NeverEnding Story*, both fantasies. He was 3-years-old when *The NeverEnding Story* was released — *Labyrinth* was released two years later.

"I just like to chill when I get off the field, try to get my mind off things," he says. "Football is football; you have to concentrate. But when I get off the field, I like to do other things."

Bingham is 15 to 20 pounds heavier than he was a year ago, though not because of such sedentary relaxation, without losing any quickness. He's "carrying the weight well," says Jamrog.

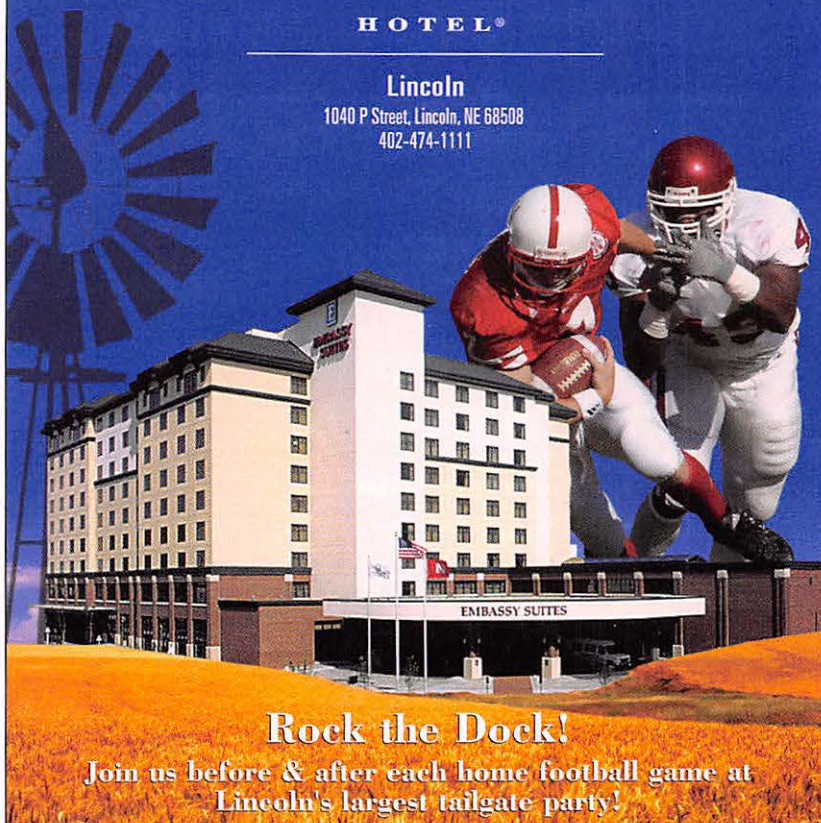
"You look at him now compared to then, he looks more like a football player." ■

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... All The Time

2003 SCHEDULE

1 Aug. 30	Oklahoma St., 2:30 p.m., ABC
2 Sept. 6	Utah State, 11:30 a.m., FSN
3 Sept. 13	Penn State, 7 p.m., ABC
4 Sept. 25	@ Southern Miss, 6:30 p.m., ESPN
5 Oct. 4	Troy State, TBA
6 Oct. 11	@ Missouri, TBA
7 Oct. 18	Texas A&M, TBA (Homecoming)
8 Oct. 25	Iowa State, TBA
9 Nov. 1	@ Texas, TBA
10 Nov. 8	@ Kansas, TBA
11 Nov. 15	Kansas State, TBA
12 Nov. 28	@ Colorado, 11 a.m., ABC
Dec. 7	Big 12 Championship at Kansas City, Mo., 7 p.m.

UPCOMING OPPONENTS' SCHEDULES

Oklahoma State (0-0)	
Aug. 30	@ Nebraska
Sept. 6	Wyoming
Sept. 13	Southwest Missouri State
Sept. 20	@ SMU
Oct. 4	Louisiana-Lafayette
Oct. 11	Kansas State
Oct. 18	Texas Tech
Oct. 25	@ Texas A&M
Nov. 1	@ Oklahoma
Nov. 8	Texas
Nov. 15	Kansas
Nov. 22	@ Baylor

Utah State (0-0)	
Aug. 28	@ Utah
Sept. 6	@ Nebraska
Sept. 13	@ Arizona State
Sept. 27	Louisiana-Monroe
Oct. 4	@ New Mexico
Oct. 11	Wyoming
Oct. 18	@ North Texas
Oct. 25	Arkansas State
Nov. 1	Middle Tennessee State
Nov. 8	@ New Mexico State
Nov. 15	Troy State
Nov. 22	@ Idaho

BIG 12 AT A GLANCE

Saturday, Aug. 23
California vs. Kansas State, Kansas City
(Black Coaches Association Classic)

Saturday, Aug. 30
Oklahoma State @ Nebraska
Troy State @ Kansas State
Missouri vs. Illinois, St. Louis

Arkansas State @ A&M
Northern Iowa @ Iowa State
Northwestern @ Kansas
Colorado vs. Colorado State, Denver
SMU @ Texas Tech
North Texas @ Oklahoma
UAB @ Baylor

GAME 1

Oklahoma State Aug. 30

Location: Stillwater, Okla.

Enrollment: 21,100

2002 record: 8-5

Coach: Les Miles, third year

Series: Nebraska leads 35-3-1



2:30 p.m. CDT, ABC
Memorial Stadium, Lincoln, Neb.

Cowboy to Watch

Wide receiver Rashaun Woods enters the 2003 season the NCAA's top returning pass catcher in both receptions per game and yards per game. He begins his senior season just 125 yards from passing Hart Lee Dykes as OSU's all-time career receiver. He needs just three touchdown catches to erase Dykes' career mark of 29.



Quick Facts

Junior Josh Fields, who was named to the preseason watch list for the 2003 Davey O'Brien National Quarterback Award, set single-season OSU records for completions (226), attempts (408), yards (3,145) and touchdowns (31). He has completed nearly 55 percent of his career passing attempts.

Tailback Tatum Bell rushed for 1,096 yards last season and is bigger and stronger. Depth behind Bell is excellent, with Seymore Shaw and Vernand Morency rushing for 767 yards and eight TDs.

The offensive line has three starters and three top backups back after leading the Big 12 in fewest sacks allowed (17).

Kicker Luke Phillips was a Groza Award candidate the last two years and has made 26-of-33 field goals during those seasons.

ON DECK

Utah State Sept. 6

Location: Logan, Utah

Enrollment: 21,490

2002 record: 4-7

Coach: Mick Dennehy, 4th year

Series: Nebraska leads 7-0

11:30 a.m. CDT, FSN
Memorial Stadium, Lincoln, Neb.



TENTATIVE 2-DEEPS

NEBRASKA OFFENSE

XWR	2	Ross Pilkington*	6-0	190	So.
	13	Tim Liley*	6-2	205	Sr.
LT	51	Richie Incognito*	6-3	300	So.
	69	Nick Piovendo*	6-3	300	Jr.
LG	78	Mike Erickson**	6-4	305	Jr.
	72	Tim Green	6-4	325	Sr.
C	79	Josh Sewell*	6-2	300	Sr.
	64	Kurt Mann	6-3	290	RFr.
RG	71	Jake Andersen*	6-1	300	Jr.
	75	Brandon Koch	6-3	310	So.
RT	68	Dan Vili Waldrop***	6-5	350	Sr.
	76	Chris Loos**	6-3	290	Sr.
TE	11	Matt Herian*	6-5	240	So.
	82	Phil Peetz**	6-2	270	Sr.
QB	5	Jammal Lord***	6-2	220	Sr.
	16	Mike Stuntz**	6-1	200	Jr.
FB	4	Judd Davies***	6-0	250	Sr.
	45	Steve Kriewald**	5-10	250	Jr.
IB	9	David Horne*	6-0	190	So.
	1	Josh Davis**	5-11	205	Sr.
ZWR	24	Jack O'Holleran	5-11	205	Jr.
	10	Mark LeFlore*	5-11	185	So.
PK	22	Sandro DeAngelis*	5-8	190	Jr.

NEBRASKA DEFENSE

LDE	5	Benard Thomas**	6-4	265	Jr.
	96	Titus Adams*	6-3	280	So.
NT	59	Ryon Bingham**	6-3	290	Sr.
	94	Patrick Kabongo***	6-6	320	Sr.
DT	66	Le Kevin Smith*	6-2	305	So.
	97	Seppo Ewvaray*	6-5	320	So.
RDE	88	Trevor Johnson***	6-4	255	Sr.
	90	Adam Carriker	6-6	260	RFr.
BLB	2	T.J. Hollowell***	6-0	230	Jr.
	11	Ira Cooper**	6-2	230	Jr.
MLB	38	Barrett Ruud*	6-2	240	Jr.
	54	Chad Sievers*	6-3	230	Jr.
WLB	7	Demorrio Williams	6-1	210	Sr.
	39	Chad Buller*	5-11	215	Sr.
LCB	3	Fabian Washington*	5-11	175	So.
	4	Terrell Butler*	5-10	190	Sr.
FS	20	Josh Bullocks*	6-1	195	So.
	31	Jerrell Pippens***	6-2	195	Sr.
SS	21	Phillip Bland**	5-11	205	Jr.
or	14	Daniel Bullocks*	6-1	200	So.
RCB	1	Lornell McPherson**	5-9	175	Jr.
or	28	Pat Ricketts***	5-11	180	Sr.
P	19	Kyle Larson**	6-0	205	Sr.

OKLAHOMA STATE OFFENSE

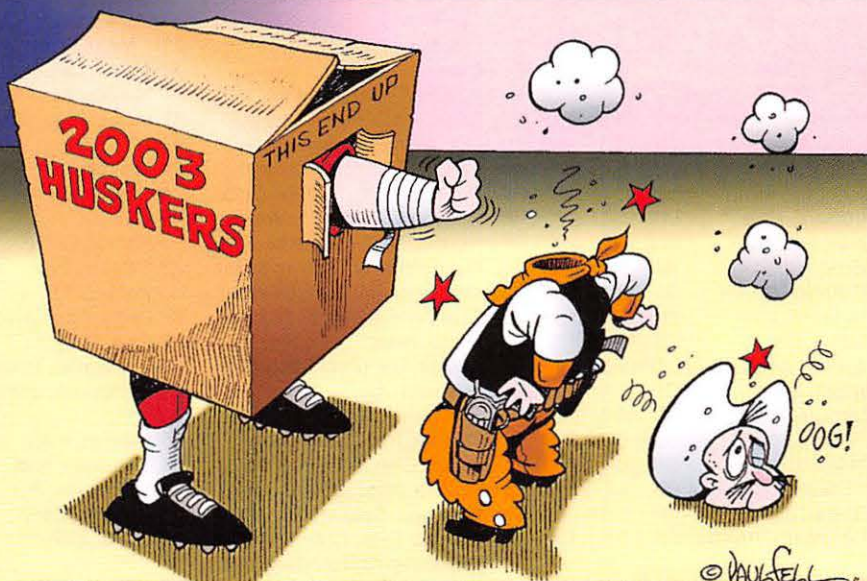
WR	82	Rashaun Woods	6-2	195	Sr.
	81	Kenneth Williams	6-4	200	So.
LT	87	Matt Hardison	6-6	285	Sr.
	74	Doug Bond	6-3	280	RFr.
LG	69	Chris Akin	6-2	290	Jr.
	66	Corey Curtis	6-5	285	So.
C	56	Ben Buie	6-2	310	Jr.
	63	Bryon Machado	6-2	280	So.
RG	76	Sam Mayes	6-4	305	Jr.
	64	Jon Cruz	6-5	350	RFr.
RT	78	Kellen Davis	6-5	280	So.
	73	Doug Koenig	6-4	295	Sr.
TE	86	Billy Bajema	6-5	255	Jr.
	80	Charlie Johnson	6-4	280	So.
QB	13	Josh Fields	6-1	210	Jr.
	14	Jamie Beeghley	6-3	195	RFr.
TB	7	Tatum Bell	5-11	205	Sr.
	22	Seymore Shaw	6-0	225	So.
FB	40	Tim Burroughs	6-1	245	Sr.
	39	Shawn Willis	6-1	235	So.
WR	84	D'Juan Woods	6-2	200	RFr.
	85	John Wohlgenuth	6-2	190	Jr.
K	27	Luke Phillips	6-0	170	Sr.

OKLAHOMA STATE DEFENSE

RE	46	Greg Richmond	6-2	245	Sr.
	50	Darnell Smith	6-2	245	RFr.
DT	96	Clay Coe	6-2	285	Jr.
	98	Mike Williams	6-0	300	Sr.
NG	83	Kyle Hix	6-5	290	So.
	94	Marcus Craig	5-11	300	Jr.
DE	91	Antonio Smith	6-3	270	Jr.
	95	Khream Smith	6-4	260	Sr.
LB	12	Paul Duran	6-1	240	So.
	44	Pagitte McGee	6-1	230	So.
MLB	99	Lawrence Pinson	6-2	245	So.
	48	Glenn Jackson	6-1	220	RFr.
LCB	9	Darrent Williams	5-9	175	Jr.
	25	Andre Johnson	5-10	190	So.
SS	20	Vernon Grant	5-10	185	So.
	2	Fath' Carter	6-2	220	Sr.
FS	10	Thomas Wright	5-11	185	So.
	14	Chase Holland	6-0	205	So.
WS	3	Elbert Craig	6-1	210	Sr.
	35	Jamar Ransom	5-11	210	So.
RCB	6	Robert Jones	6-0	190	So.
	28	Daniel McLomore	5-7	160	So.
P	18	Cole Farden	5-11	210	Jr.

THE PAUL FELL PREDICTION

NEBRASKA vs. OKLAHOMA STATE



AUGUST 30, 2003

COWBOYS GET FIRST PEEK AT THE "NEW HUSKERS" IN 2003 SEASON OPENER!

PICKS

Brian Hill Editor

Oklahoma State would appear to have more weapons, with all-everything wide receiver Rashaun Woods, quarterback Josh Fields, tailback Tatum Bell and kicker Luke Phillips. After ending Nebraska's dominance last year, the Cowboys will come in confident . . . maybe overconfident. No one is quite sure what to expect from the Huskers. If an opener can be considered a must-win game, this is it. **Nebraska 34, Oklahoma State 30**

Mike Babcock Contributing Editor

Nebraska played essentially the same Oklahoma State team to three points at

OKLAHOMA STATE AT NEBRASKA

Stillwater last season, and the Cowboys have to come to Memorial Stadium in the midst of the Husker Nation celebration. Plus, Coach Les Miles and his staff don't have a lot to go on, given Nebraska's new offensive and defensive coordinators. **Nebraska 28, Oklahoma State 21**

Terry Douglass Grand Island Independent Sports Editor

Nebraska's game against Oklahoma State will be one of the most anticipated season openers in recent memory. After a 7-7 season, expect a charged up Cornhusker team to make an early statement against the top-25 ranked Cowboys. **Nebraska 31, Oklahoma State 26**

2003 EARLY REPORTING ROSTER (105)

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown (school)
96	*Adams, Titus	NT	6-3	290	So.	Omaha, Neb. (Creighton Prep)
27	**Amos, Willie	RCB	6-0	185	Jr.	Sweetwater, Texas
71	*Andersen, Jake	OG	6-1	300	Jr.	Littleton, Colo. (Mullen)
	Austin, Greg	C	6-2	290	Fr.	Cypress, Texas (Cypress-Fairbanks)
59	**Bingham, Ryon	NT	6-3	290	Sr.	Sandy, Utah (Alta)
	Birkel, Andy	WR	6-3	175	Fr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
21	**Bland, Philip	FS	5-11	205	Jr.	Lafayette, Colo. (Fairview)
34	Bradley, Stewart	MLB	6-4	260	RFr.	Salt Lake City, Ut. (Highland)
	Brothers, Titus	LCB	5-11	190	Fr.	Converse, Texas (Judson)
17	Brungardt, Mark	BLB	6-2	225	RFr.	Norfolk, Neb. (Catholic)
39	*Buller, Chad	WLB	5-11	215	Sr.	Henderson, Neb. (Heartland)
14	*Bullocks, Daniel	SS	6-1	200	So.	Chattanooga, Tenn. (Hixson)
20	*Bullocks, Josh	FS	6-1	195	So.	Chattanooga, Tenn. (Hixson)
36	Burrow, Dan	FS	5-10	185	Jr.	Ames, Iowa
4	*Butler, Terrell	LCB	5-10	190	Sr.	Austell, Ga. (Pebblebrook)
	Byford, Brett	OG	6-4	290	Fr.	Hartselle, Ala.
90	Carriker, Adam	DE	6-6	250	RFr.	Kennewick, Wash.
11	**Cooper, Ira	BLB	6-2	230	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Westside)
	Dailey, Joe	QB	6-1	200	Fr.	Jersey City, N.J. (St. Peter's)
4	***Davies, Judd	FB	6-0	250	Sr.	Omaha, Neb. (Millard North)
1	**Davis, Josh	IB	5-11	205	Sr.	Loveland, Colo.
22	*DeAngelis, Sandro	PK	5-8	190	Jr.	Niagara Falls, Ont., Canada (St. Joseph's Collegiate, N.Y.)
	DeFrاند, Donald	RCB	6-2	180	So.	Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (Stranahan/Dodge City CC)
	DeLone, Darren	OT	6-5	320	Jr.	Pomona, Calif. Garey/Mt. San Antonio CC)
	Dyches, David	PK	6-1	185	Fr.	Spring, Texas (Westfield)
78	**Erickson, Mike	OG	6-4	305	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Papillion-LaVista)
97	*Evwaraye, Seppo	DT	6-5	320	So.	Laurel, Neb. (Laurel-Concord)
28	Fluellen, Isaiah	WR	6-0	185	RFr.	Ramstein, Germany (Ramstein America)
	Green, Tierre	IB	6-1	195	Fr.	Omaha, Neb. (Benson)
72	Green, Tim	OG	6-4	325	Sr.	Omaha, Neb. (Westside)
99	Greeson, Brandon	NT	6-3	315	RFr.	High Point, N.C. (Central)
6	***Grixby, DeAntae	FB	5-8	215	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Central)
73	Helming, Jared	NT	6-3	290	So.	Springfield, Mo. (Kickapoo)
11	*Herian, Matt	TE	6-5	240	So.	Pierce, Neb.
2	***Hollowell, T.J.	BLB	6-0	230	Sr.	Copperas Cove, Texas
40	*Hopkins, Lannie	WLB	6-2	220	Jr.	Rowlett, Texas
9	*Horne, David	IB	6-0	190	So.	Omaha, Neb. (Central)
29	Huston, Kellen	CB	5-11	200	Jr.	Ankeny, Iowa
49	Ickes, Adam	WLB	6-2	225	So.	Page, Neb. (Orchard)
51	*Incognito, Richie	OT	6-3	300	So.	Glendale, Ariz. (Mountain Ridge)
88	***Johnson, Trevor	DE	6-4	255	Sr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Northeast)
94	***Kabongo, Patrick	NT	6-6	320	Sr.	Montreal, Quebec, Canada (Vanier Collegiate Prep)
47	Keiser, Dusty	TE	6-3	240	Jr.	Norfolk, Neb. (Catholic)
	Kelly, Lane	DE/LS	6-4	210	Fr.	Omaha, Neb. (Creighton Prep)
75	Koch, Brandon	OG	6-3	310	So.	Gothenburg, Neb.
45	**Kriewald, Steve	FB	5-10	250	Jr.	Scotia, Neb. (North Loup-Scotia)
95	Krug, Nathan	DT	6-4	245	So.	Chapman, Neb. (Nebraska Christian)
19	**Larson, Kyle	P	6-0	205	Sr.	Funk, Neb. (Kearney)
10	*LeFlore, Mark	WR	5-11	185	So.	Omaha, Neb. (Central)
66	Leslie, Jermaine	OG	6-1	315	RFr.	Weatherford, Texas
13	*Liley, Tim	WR	6-2	205	Sr.	Lakewood, Colo. (Mullen)
63	Limbaugh, Jack	C	6-4	285	Sr.	Algona, Iowa
15	Lindstrom, Brett	QB	6-0	190	Sr.	Omaha, Neb. (Millard West)
70	***Lohr, Jason	NT	6-2	285	Sr.	Tulsa, Okla. (Jenks)
76	**Loos, Chris	OT	6-3	290	Sr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
5	***Lord, Jammal	QB	6-2	220	Sr.	Bayonne, N.J.
64	Mann, Kurt	C	6-3	290	RFr.	Grand Island, Neb.
50	McBride, Jeff	DE	6-4	245	Jr.	Brule, Neb. (South Platte)
	McKeon, Corey	WLB	6-2	215	Fr.	Naperville, Ill. (North)
18	McLaughlin, Mike	WR	5-11	180	So.	Omaha, Neb. (Millard North)
1	**McPherson, Lornell	RCB	5-9	175	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Central)
21	**Miller, Robin	IB	5-11	230	Sr.	Kent, Wash. (Kent-Meridian)
44	Moore, Jay	DE	6-4	265	RFr.	Elkhorn, Neb.
	Mueller, Josh	TE	6-6	250	Fr.	Columbus, Neb. (Lakeview)
57	Muhammad, Wali	DE	6-2	245	So.	Bloomfield, N.J. (Bloomfield/Coffeyville CC)
84	Mulkey, Grant	WR	5-11	185	RFr.	Arlington, Texas
24	O'Holleran, Jack	WR	5-10	205	Jr.	North Platte, Neb.
8	Ommert, Ryan	WR	5-10	195	Sr.	Cambridge, Neb.
	Patrick, Chris	DE	6-6	245	Fr.	Ithaca, Mich.
82	**Peetz, Phil	TE	6-2	270	Sr.	Elkhorn, Neb.
	Phillips, J.B.	TE	6-3	250	Fr.	Colleyville, Texas (Heritage)
77	Phillips, Jemayel	OT	6-6	365	RFr.	Winfield, La.
56	Pike, Gary	OT	6-4	320	So.	Pueblo, Colo. (Centennial)
2	*Pilkington, Ross	WR	6-0	190	So.	Ft. Collins, Colo. (Loveland)
31	***Pippens, Jerrell	FS	6-2	195	Sr.	Philadelphia, Pa. (West Catholic)
25	Pittman, Kade	WR	5-11	200	Fr.	North Platte, Neb.
69	*Povendo, Nick	OT	6-3	300	Jr.	Keller, Texas
28	***Ricketts, Pat	RCB	5-11	180	Sr.	Omaha, Neb. (Millard North)
30	Robison, Joey	CB	5-9	170	So.	Bertrand, Neb.
22	*Ross, Cory	IB	5-6	215	So.	Denver, Colo. (Thomas Jefferson)
38	**Ruud, Barrett	MLB	6-2	240	Jr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
	Ruud, Bo	BLB	6-3	210	Fr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
42	**Safranek, Steve	MLB	6-1	240	Sr.	Omaha, Neb. (Gross)
	Schuler, Ryan	OT	6-7	270	Fr.	Sioux Falls, S.D. (Washington)
83	Septak, Chris	TE	6-3	255	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Millard West)
79	*Sewell, Josh	C	6-2	300	Sr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
8	Shanle, Andrew	CB	6-1	200	RFr.	St. Edward, Neb.
23	*Siegel, Shane	SS	6-2	220	So.	Grand Island, Neb.
54	*Sievers, Chad	MLB	6-3	230	Jr.	Valley, Neb. (Valley/New Mexico St.)
66	*Smith, Le Kevin	DT	6-2	305	So.	Macon, Ga. (Stratford Academy)
16	**Stuntz, Mike	QB	6-1	200	Jr.	Council Bluffs, Iowa (St. Albert)
	Teamer, Brandon	DT	6-5	265	Fr.	Omaha, Neb. (Central)
5	**Thomas, Benard	DE	6-4	265	Jr.	East Palo Alto, Calif. (St. Francis)
10	Thorne, Fred	CB	5-10	190	Sr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
25	Tiedtke, Blake	SS	5-10	195	So.	Cedar Rapids, Iowa (Jefferson)
57	Timm, Cory	OT	6-4	325	RFr.	Yutan
41	Todd, Dane	FB	5-10	235	RFr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
93	Toline, Tyler	DE	6-2	240	Jr.	Wahoo, Neb.
	Turner, Adrain	CB	5-10	185	Fr.	Terrell, Texas
68	***Vili Waldrop, Dan	OT	6-5	350	Sr.	Wilmington, Calif. (Banning)
3	*Washington, Fabian	LCB	5-11	175	So.	Bradenton, Fla. (Bayshore)
20	Wigert, Kiffin	WR	5-9	160	Jr.	Cheyenne, Wyo. (Central)
7	*Williams, Demorrio	WLB	6-1	210	Sr.	Longview, Texas (Beckville/Kilgore JC)
34	Wingender, Andy	FB	5-10	250	Sr.	Omaha, Neb. (Mt. Michael)
3	**Zajicek, Ben	SE	6-0	210	Jr.	Beatrice, Neb.

* — indicates letters earned

Coaching Staff

Head coach: Frank Solich

Assistant head coach/quarterbacks coach: Turner Gill

Offensive coordinator/offensive line coach: Barney Cotton

Defensive coordinator: Bo Pelini

Receivers coach: Ron Brown

Running backs coach/passing game coordinator: Tim Albin

Tight ends coach/recruiting coordinator: Scott Downing

Defensive backs coach: Marvin Sanders

Linebackers coach: Jimmy Williams

Defensive line coach/special teams coordinator: Jeff Jamrog

Graduate assistant: Carl Pelini, Dan McLaughlin

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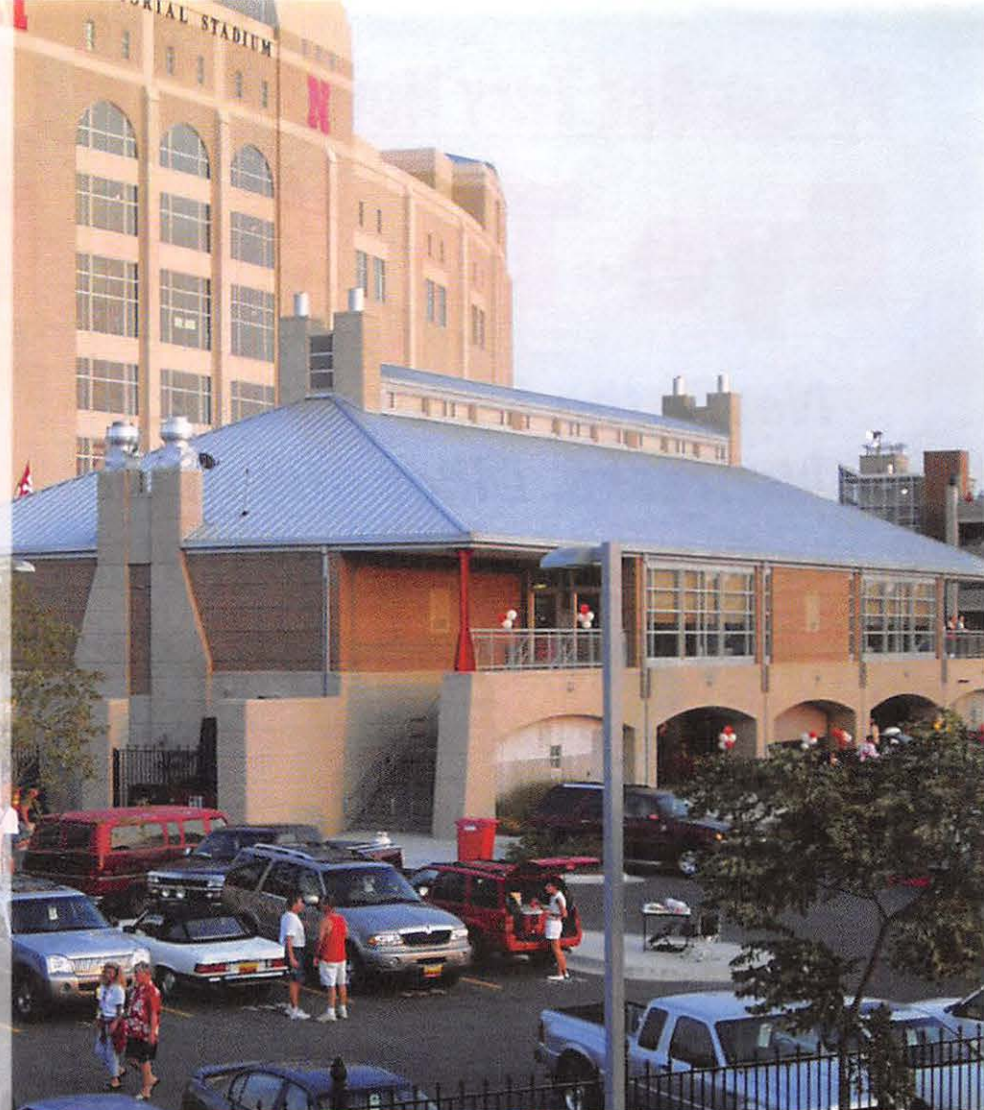
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Eye To The Future

Never the featured back at Nebraska, Miles still made the most of his opportunities

By Mike Babcock

Alice Miles made the trip from New Jersey with her son, Paul, when he enrolled at Nebraska in the late summer of 1981. She spent a few days in Lincoln before returning.

When she left for the airport, she had Coach Tom Osborne's assurance that her son was in good hands. Osborne made certain she had the essential phone numbers, including those of his home and office as well as the office of Dr. Ursula Walsh, the Cornhuskers' academic counselor.

Osborne also had Alice Miles' assurance that her son would do his part.

"Don't worry," she said. "You won't have any problems with Paul."

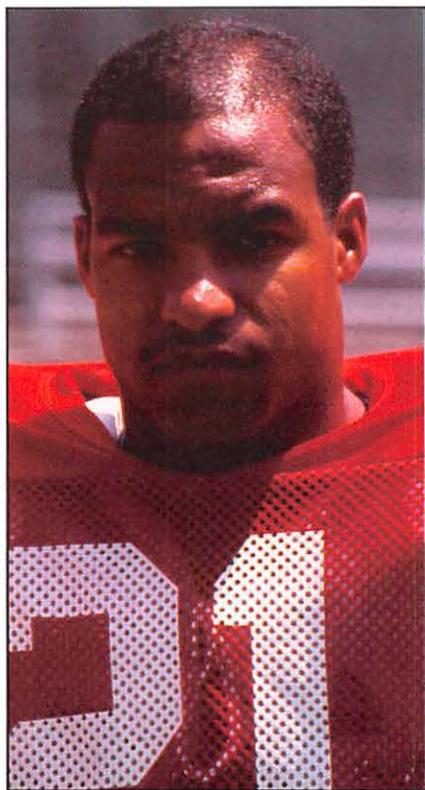
In case Osborne did, however, he could call, and she would be on the next flight to pick up her son and take him back to New Jersey, freeing his scholarship for someone more deserving.

On occasion, Osborne would bring up the subject, suggesting that he might have to make that call to New Jersey. But he was joking. The scholarship was never in jeopardy.

Alice Miles knew it wouldn't be. By all indications, she raised her son right. "I was fortunate to have my mom," says Miles, who earned three letters as a Cornhusker I-back.

(His father died in 1969, when Paul was only 6-years-old.)

Because his career overlapped those of Mike Rozier, Jeff Smith and Doug DuBoise and because of injuries



Paul Miles came to Nebraska from Princeton, N.J., and earned three letters as an I-back.

— including a season-ending shoulder injury in non-conference play as a junior — Miles was never the featured back at Nebraska. And he was never a "top student," he says.

But he made the most of his ability on the field, always trying to control the things he could control, staying in shape, knowing the plays, running in the right lane on the kickoff team, and got the most out of the opportunities presented in the classroom, always with an eye to the future, when football would be finished. Going to class and getting an

education also were things he could control.

Miles is president of Junior Achievement of New Jersey now, the latest step in a journey that has taken him through a brief career in the NFL as well as jobs as an international marketing director for Nike, sales representative for Bristol-Myers Squibb and vice president of the short-lived XFL.

He and wife Lisa have established a foundation for kids with cancer (Miles 2 Go 4 Kids), absorbed by Robert Wood Johnson's Institute for Children with Cancer three years ago. And the journey isn't finished. Ultimately, he plans to be in sports administration at the collegiate or professional level.

That's his "passion, to finish what I started," he says.

An Achilles injury ended his playing career before it started. He went from Seattle, which drafted him in the seventh round in 1986, to Tampa Bay in 1987. Then he returned to Nebraska, where he worked with diversity issues in the chancellor's office while completing a master's degree.

He was speaking in Oregon on behalf of the University of Nebraska Alumni Association when he was introduced to Phil Knight, founder and chairman of Nike, Inc. — though Miles didn't know.

Knight told him he looked as if he could still play football and wanted to know what his goals were. Miles said he would like to work in the front office of a sports organization someday.

The conversation turned to athletic shoes and Miles told the CEO of Nike he had preferred Adidas shoes as a player and liked Reebok because the company was a partner in a "Just Say No" poster for the Nebraska Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council, for which he was on the board of directors.

Not long after that, Miles got a

phone call from Nike, the third shoe company on his list. Before he returned the call, he spent three hours in the library, researching the company. Returning the call, after learning who Knight was, was like facing "fourth-and-1" against Oklahoma," Miles says.

Knight left a board meeting to take his call. Soon after, Miles was working for Nike. He spent four years traveling for the company, working with the world's top track and field athletes.

And Knight never let him forget their first meeting.

The Nike job ended when he returned to New Jersey to be close to his mom. She died from lung cancer in 1995, at age 60. Her legacy was the Miles 2 Go 4 Kids Foundation.

Alice Miles instilled the personal values in her son, capitalizing on opportunities and always having a plan, that were developed during his time at Nebraska, playing for Osborne.

When he signed with the Seahawks following the 1986 draft, Miles' initial reaction was that he needed to wire his mom \$10,000. She declined the offer. There would come a time, she said, when he would have the wherewithal to help anyone he wanted to help. And she was right.

Ironically, his sports administration goal can be traced, in part, to elementary school, when he aspired to be a garbage collector. A Junior Achievement representative suggested if that were the case, he should consider building his own garbage hauling business, being the person in charge.

Another of his personality traits was shaped early on when Muhammad Ali made an unexpected visit to his neighborhood in East Orange, N.J. Ali had stopped to help one of the Miles family's neighbors, whose car had broken down on the highway, and had driven her home.

Ali was quickly surrounded by neighborhood children and didn't leave until he had given everyone an autograph, beginning with the smallest. Miles never forgot Ali's kindness, just as he never forgot his mother's words to Osborne before she returned home in the late summer of 1981.

"That will stay with me forever," he said. ■



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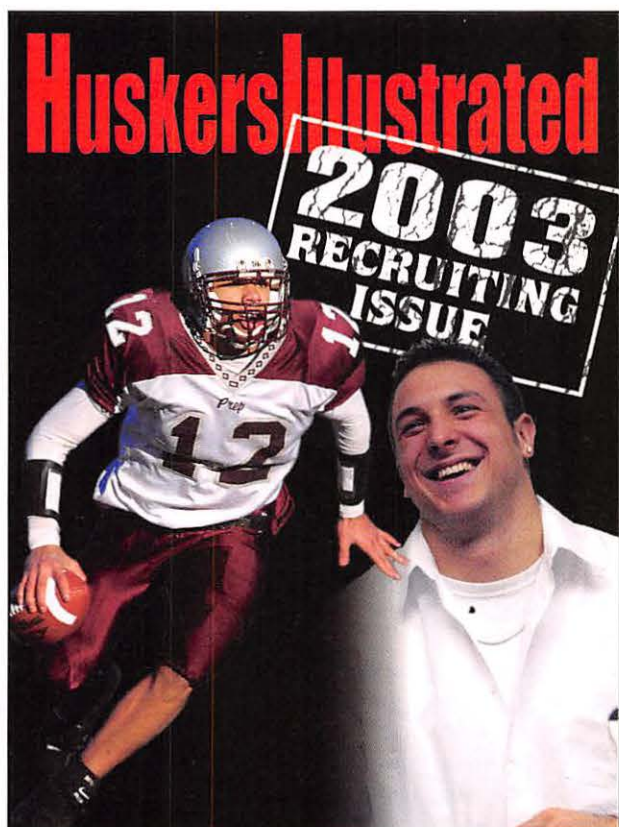
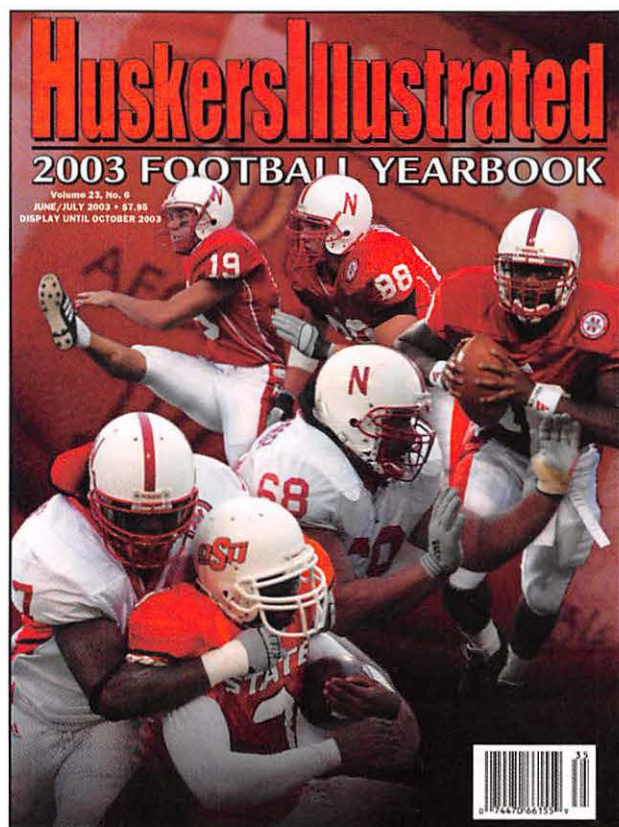
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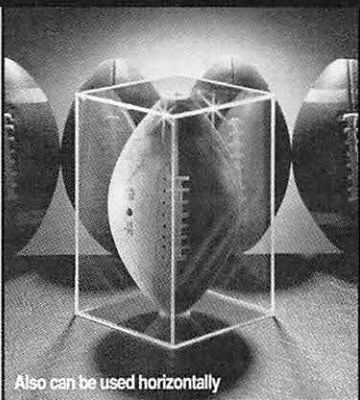
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Leading Role

*After 3 seasons
as a bit player,
Schrاد ready to
lead transition*

By Todd Henrichs

The shadows cast by the bright lights in the Coliseum seem a little longer this year.

Anna Schrاد has played volleyball on the international level. The Lincoln (Neb.) Pius X graduate trained this summer with the top collegiate players under the auspices of the U.S. National Team.

But in her cherished role as a Husker, Schrاد has been a bit player in three seasons. She'll need to lean on all of her experience to lead Nebraska in what's easily the most dramatic transition year in the storied program's recent history.

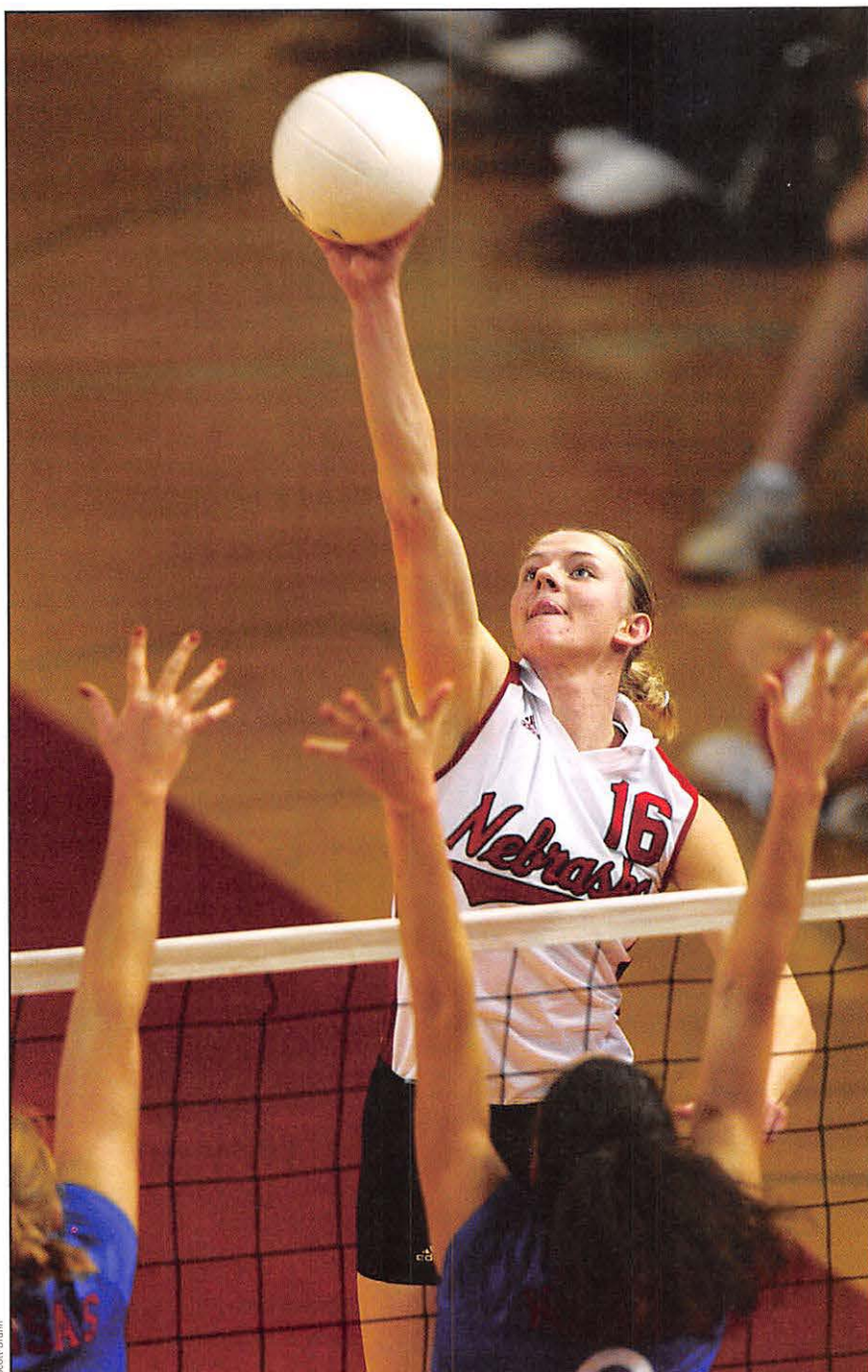
Schrاد is one of only three returning starters. The losses include three All-Americans — outside hitter Laura Pilakowski, middle blocker Amber Holmquist and setter Greichaly Cepero — along with libero and team captain Lindsay Wischmeier.

As Nebraska's nucleus for the past three seasons, those players led NU to a national championship, two trips to the final four and three perfect seasons within the Big 12.

Schrاد shares in those accomplishments and the Huskers' 96-4 record over her first three seasons. But as a co-captain and newcomer to the role of go-to player, it's her job to keep Nebraska in the spotlight.

"I don't feel there's been too big of a drop-off," said Schrاد, who ranked fourth on the team with 249 kills last season. "We lost however many All-Americans, but the pieces are coming together."

Finding the best fit, however, could



Anna Schrاد, a senior from Lincoln, is one of three returning starters.

be a season-long project, Coach John Cook predicts. The Huskers opened practice without a defined starting lineup or even the system they will use this season.

Some of those decisions will be determined by how the highly regarded class of incoming freshmen fit in. Regardless, all of Nebraska's returning players will be adjusting to

new roles.

"What we have are a lot of interesting options," said Cook, beginning his fourth season as Nebraska's head coach. "It's going to be fun to put it all together."

Cook is anxious to see Schrad emerge. She started the last two years, but with Pilakowski and Nancy Metcalf around was never Nebraska's first option offensively.

Melissa Elmer, too, started last season but not in a primary role. If her shoulder holds up, the sophomore from Fort Wayne, Ind., could grow into the All-American middle that has been the centerpiece of every successful Nebraska team.

Another staple of Nebraska volleyball, the All-American setter, has a new aspirant. Jacksonville, Ill., sophomore Michelle Lynch, an understudy to Cepero the past two years, offers Nebraska's offense an all-new look.

At 5-foot-10 and left-handed, Lynch is much more of a pure setter than was Cepero, but NU will give up some of its blocking threat.

Cook may consider a two-setter system to maintain an imposing front line, but only if freshman Dani Busboom, a Freeman High School

(Adams, Neb.) graduate, is ready to step into such a significant role.

Cambridge (Neb.) product Christina Houghtelling, another promising newcomer, could immediately challenge for playing time at the middle blocker spot opposite Elmer, and incoming freshman Amanda McCormick of Muncie, Ind., will compete for the libero — or defensive specialist — spot.

Returning players Sara Westling of Lincoln (middle blocker) and Jenae Dowling of Fort Wayne, Ind., (libero) are considered favorites to win starting spots at those positions.

Sophomore Jennifer Saleaumua of National City, Calif., appears destined to move from a right-side starting spot to the left, allowing her to make an even-greater impact setting and passing.

On the right, junior Ally Rebholz of Indianapolis and redshirt freshman Kelsey Fautsch of Chisago Lakes, Minn., will battle for playing time.

Cook said it's important for Nebraska to use its depth as an advantage.

"We have a lot of players that can play," he said. "It's going to be about finding roles for everybody, letting

people compete a little bit and probably having a rotation where we're playing nine kids a match."

With 70 consecutive victories in conference play, the Huskers should expect stiffer tests within the Big 12 this season. But the non-conference slate is less aggressive than past years. Nebraska, which opens its season Aug. 29 in a tournament at Illinois State, will face only two teams — Michigan State and Northern Iowa — that made it past the second round of the NCAA Tournament last year.

If Nebraska can get past the second round this season, it will almost certainly have the home-court advantage as a pre-determined host for regionals. Not having to worry about a No. 1 seed could buy Cook additional time to find the best lineup and system for late in the year.

Even with the big four gone from last season, Nebraska's final four aspirations haven't changed.

"We have great challenges ahead of us, definitely, but I don't see any reason why we shouldn't have the same goals," Lynch said. "People are going to be developing this year — me included — but I think it will be a positive year." ■

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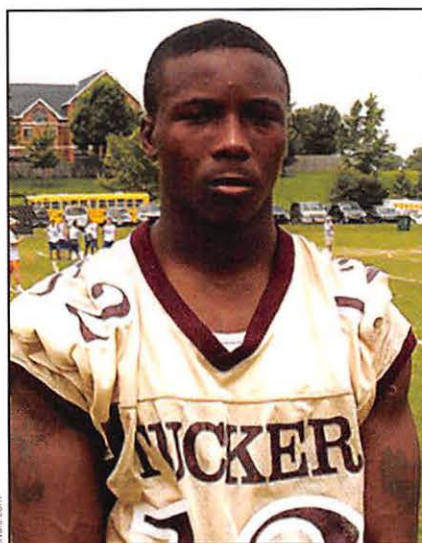
Huskers get commitments from pair of signal callers

By Doug Horwich

Q uarterback is a position that most programs try to restock on an annual basis.

At Nebraska, the recent transfers of Curt Dukes and Garth Glissman have left the position extremely thin.

While incoming freshman Joe Dailey gives the team a very promising young player behind Jammal Lord, overall depth at the position is limited. The Husker staff is therefore aggressively pursuing a number of the nation's top athletic quarterback prospects in an attempt to bring in an infusion of young talent at the position.



D.T. McDowell passed for 1,300 yards and 12 touchdowns while rushing for 400 yards and 12 scores as a junior.

The recruiting efforts at this position already have been extremely successful, with two oral commitments having already been obtained from top targets.

The first came from Papillion-Lavista (Neb.) High School's Allan Evridge (6-foot-1, 205, 4.5 40-yard dash), who committed to Nebraska

in late June after impressing Husker coaches at Big Red Football Camp. Evridge is an accurate passer who also has the athletic ability to gain yards on the ground.

A second commitment came roughly one month later in the form of D.T. McDowell (6-0, 190, 4.5) from Tucker High School in Tucker, Ga. McDowell is an extremely quick and elusive player with outstanding arm strength and accuracy.

While attending a summer baseball camp in Lincoln, McDowell decided to visit the Husker campus and managed to make quite an impression on the coaching staff.

Despite these two early commitments, the Husker staff continues to pursue a handful of the nation's top prospects. One of their top targets is Shae Reagan (6-3, 230, 4.7), a highly recruited athlete from Idalou High



Allan Evridge

NEBRASKA COMMITMENTS FOR 2004

Player	Hometown (school)	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.
Lance Brandenburgh	Overland Park, Kan. (St. Thomas Aquinas)	6-1	215	LB
Andy Christensen	Bennington, Neb.	6-3	275	DT
Allan Evridge	Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-LaVista)	6-1	205	QB
Michael Keenan	Kansas City, Mo. (Oak Park)	6-2	220	LB
Maurice McClellan	Pawcatuck, Conn. (Stonington)	6-3	210	Ath.
D.T. McDowell	Tucker, Ga.	6-1	190	QB
Seth Olsen	Omaha, Neb. (Millard North)	6-5	300	OL
Ty Steinkuhler	Lincoln, Neb. (Southwest)	6-3	235	DE
Nathan Swift	Hutchinson, Minn.	6-3	190	WR

School in Idalou, Texas. Reagan is being recruited by many of the top programs in the country and does not currently list a favorite.

While some teams are recruiting Reagan as a defensive end or outside linebacker, Nebraska likes him as a quarterback, and he enjoyed his recent summer visit to Lincoln a great deal.

"I really felt comfortable there with the coaches, especially with Coach Turner Gill," he said. "I can really relate to him."

Reagan also enjoyed Lincoln.

"The town is great," he said. "It has enough stuff to do and not too big. I love the way the campus sits there hitting downtown. Then there is a big old stadium sitting right there."

Reagan met most of the Nebraska coaching staff.

"I got to meet Coach (Barney) Cotton, although he has been the one recruiting me all along, and also Coach (Tim) Albin, Coach Gill, Coach (Frank) Solich, Coach (Jeff) Jamrog, Coach (Scott) Downing and Coach (Ron) Brown," Reagan said. "They pretty much rolled out the red carpet."

Reagan said he plans to take an official visit to Nebraska during the season, but Texas A&M may be the team to beat, as he has an uncle who lives in College Station and once played basketball for the Aggies.

In addition to Nebraska and Texas A&M, Reagan also has written offers from Colorado State, Colorado, Oklahoma State, TCU, Texas Tech, Wisconsin, Arizona State, Baylor, Kansas and UTEP. He intends to take at least three or four of his visits before making a final decision.

Reagan said he is looking for a good fit for his personality and isn't particularly concerned about competing for the job.

"I want to feel comfortable most of all," he said. "I want to feel comfortable with the staff and the players. I don't want to be afraid to go all out. For instance, at TCU they have James Battle coming in. At Nebraska, they just got a guy from out East. I want to be able to go out there and play hard. If you're going to be good enough, you'll be the one playing."

Another top target of the Husker

RECRUITING NOTES

Huskers Working Seminole Country

By Rick Shaw

Nebaska is trying to establish more of a recruiting presence down in Florida in 2003. The Huskers already have offered scholarships to about 15 prospects from the Sunshine State heading into the fall.

One high school that the Nebraska staff is paying particularly close attention to is Lincoln High in Tallahassee. NU has extended four offers to athletes from Lincoln High and is in good shape to get at least three of the four to Lincoln for visits this fall.

Joe Manning, a 6-foot, 175-pound cornerback, lists Nebraska as his top choice. The blue-chip defensive back had seven interceptions as a junior in 2002 and has run a 4.4-second 40-yard dash. Manning claims early offers from Clemson, Cincinnati, Louisville, Michigan State, Iowa State, and Connecticut, in addition to the Huskers.

"Nebraska is at the top of my list," Manning said. "I like the way Coach (Bo) Pelini has recruited me. I also see the option of early playing time there. I think it would be a nice fit for me overall."

Offensive guard prospect, Danny Muiy, also has an eye on the Huskers. The 6-4, 270-athlete has excellent quickness for a big man. He runs a consistent 5.1-second 40. He's also garnered scholarship offers from several Division I schools, including Nebraska, Louisville, Clemson, Alabama, East Carolina, Middle Tennessee State and Connecticut. Muiy, like Manning, has the Huskers at the top of his list.

"We (he and Manning) talk about Nebraska a lot," Muiy said. "We actually want to room together. Nebraska, Louisville, and Clemson are some of the top schools that have offered both of us, but, of course, Nebraska is No.1."

Added Manning, "I had early interest in Nebraska, but when Danny told me about his interest in Nebraska, it ignited a flame. It was like pouring gasoline on the fire because we are such close friends."

A third member of the Lincoln High team who is giving strong consideration to Nebraska is outside linebacker prospect Rodney Gallon. The 6-1, 210-pound Gallon recorded 116 tackles, including 14 tackles losses, as a junior in 2002. With a 4.47 clocking in the 40, Gallon brings exceptional speed and quickness to the linebacker position.

Gallon has accumulated more than 20 early offers from some of the nation's finest football programs. He said he plans to take one of his official visits to Nebraska and fulfill a promise that he made to Nebraska's Pelini.

"Coach Pelini is a great guy to talk to," Gallon said. "He tells it like it is. Other coaches sound like a broken record . . . like a routine. When I talked to him, it was like we knew each other all of our lives. I told him when I met him that I would take one of my visits to Nebraska."

A fourth member of the Lincoln High team who has been offered by Nebraska is offensive guard Calvin Darity. Although it's still early in the process, the 6-4, 275-pound Darity is leaning toward staying in Florida to play his college football. ■

staff is Nick Patton (6-4, 195, 4.5) from Winfield High School in Winfield, Kan. Patton is one of the most highly recruited quarterbacks in the nation this year, and Nebraska is one of a handful of teams that he is considering for an official visit.

"As of right now, Kansas State and Nebraska are the two official visits that I will be visiting on my five visits," Patton said. "I don't know about the other three. I got to meet all of their (KSU) coaches, and I have only talked to two of the Nebraska coaches. Coach Gill was real cool with me. He said that he would take me under his wing if I signed there. He said that he has had a lot of success with quarterbacks like myself. He was just straightforward."

Although the home-state Wildcats appear to be slightly in the lead for Patton's signature, Nebraska, Iowa State and Missouri are not far behind. Trailing those four, Colorado, Michigan State, Tennessee, Florida and Kansas are battling for his fifth and final visit.

Patton said he intends to take his time in making a decision and wants

to use his five official visits to get a good feel for his options.

"I'm taking all of my visits," he said emphatically. "I want to see the world."

The Husker staff is also pursuing Alex Engram (6-0, 205, 4.65) from Harding High School in Warren, Ohio. Engram attended Big Red Football Camp and came away extremely impressed.

"Nebraska was everything that I expected," he said. "When I stepped on that field the first day, I got a chill through my entire body. I'm not going to lie to you."

Engram's father accompanied him on his visit to Lincoln and was just as impressed by the Husker program.

"My dad loved it," he said. "It was like the second day, and he kept whispering in my ear and preaching to me that I could be a starting quarterback at a national powerhouse with Nebraska. He was always an Ohio State and Michigan fan before, but I think it was a couple of days and it hit him — I could be a quarterback at Nebraska."

Engram has also been offered by Kansas State, Tulane, Cincinnati and Miami-Ohio, though more offers are likely on the way soon, especially if he has an impressive senior season with a new team. However, at least for the time being, Engram lists the Huskers as his clear leader.

"I like Nebraska the best," he said. "Nebraska looked like a home I could like. It's a little farther from Ohio than it is from Texas, but my parents could meet there. People don't just get lucky and get offered from prestigious football schools like Michigan, Florida State and Nebraska. That is why this offer has really got me thinking."

Since his trip to Lincoln, Engram said he has kept in frequent contact with Solich.

"I talk to Coach Solich about every week," he said. "I have called them every week since leaving after camp. He's always concerned about me. He doesn't talk about Nebraska football. His questions are about me, my mom, my family and just recently he asked about my 4th of July."

"He's my guy. I like him." ■

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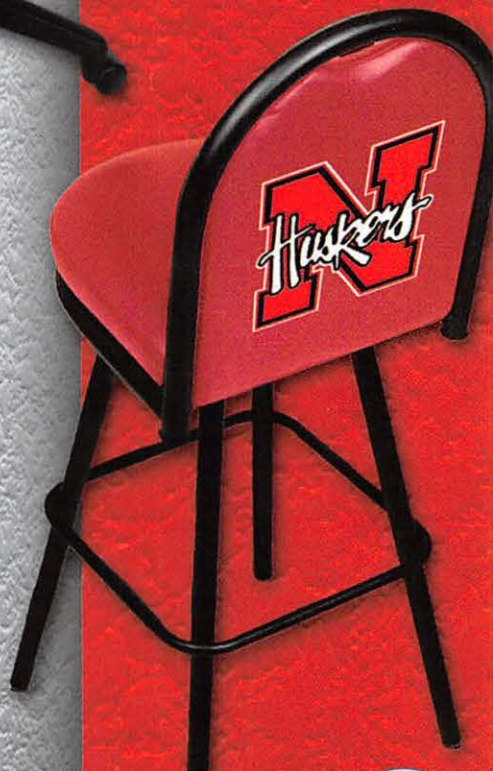
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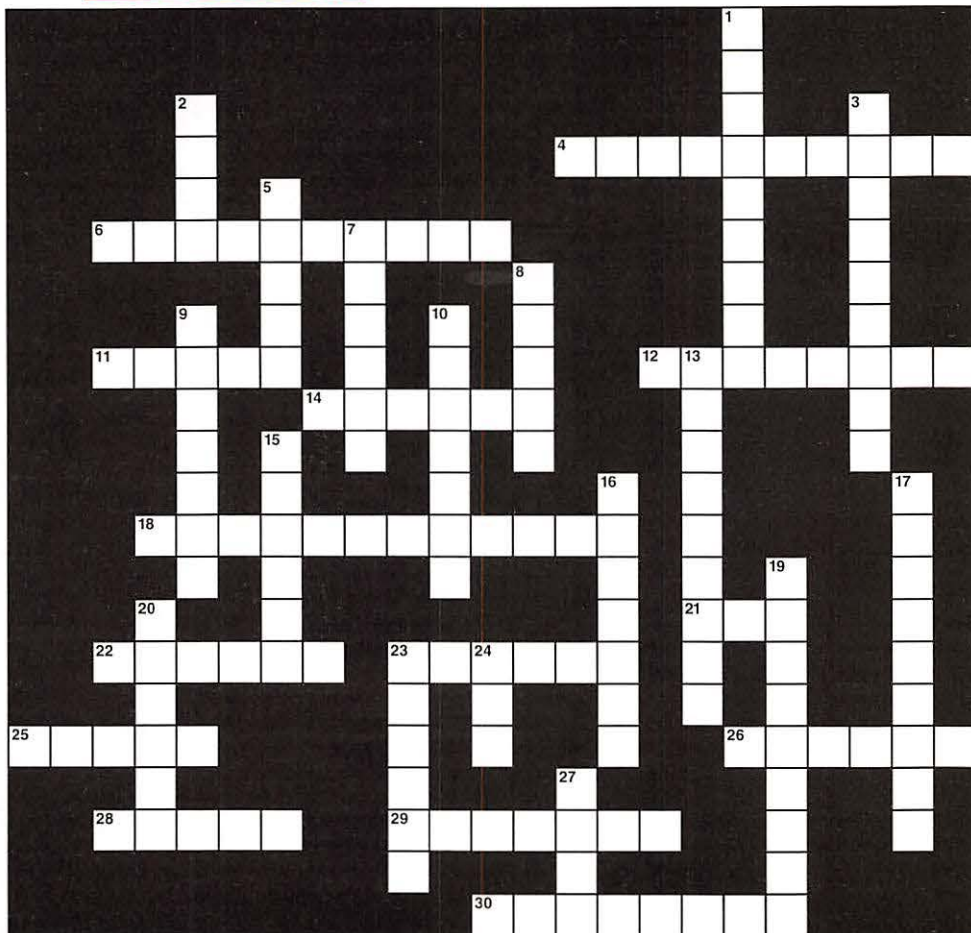
ACROSS

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- 6 NU's No. 2 (offense)
- 11 Oklahoma St. standout receiver
- 12 Philip Bland's home state
- 14 NU defensive coordinator
- 18 NU's 2002 bowl game
- 21 Network for NU-Oklahoma St. telecast
- 22 NU's football strength coach
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- 26 First Husker taken in 2003 NFL Draft
- 28 NU's receivers coach
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- 30 NU's new athletic director

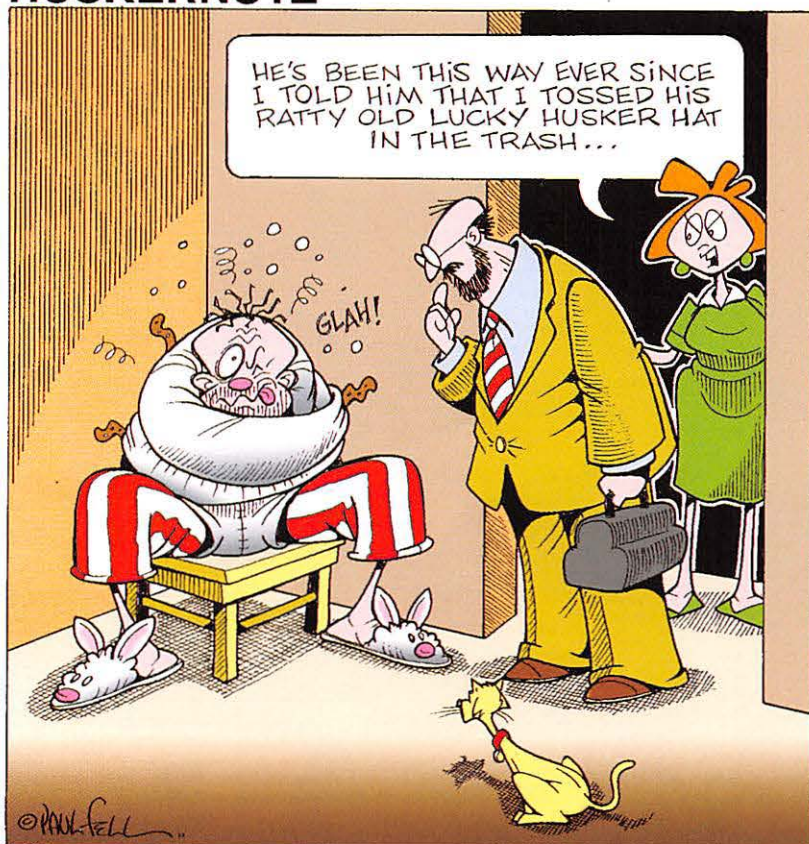
DOWN

- 1 NU's No. 2 (defense)
- 2 NU assistant head coach
- 3 NU's Sept. 6 opponent
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- 7 1972 Outland Trophy winner
- 8 NU's No. 1 (offense)
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Answers in Sept. 6 issue



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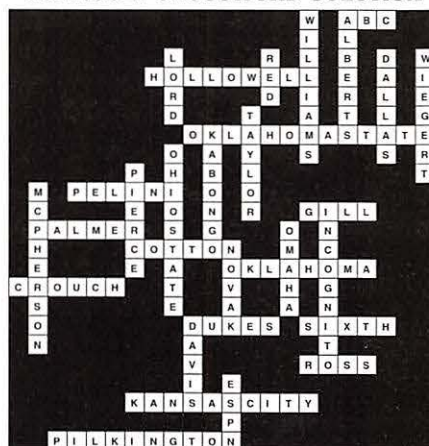
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Every Point Scored = 1 point

BONUS Points—Offense

Passing Yards over 300 = 5 points
Rushing Yards over 200 = 5 points
Every Sack Allowed = -1 point
Every Interception = -1 point

BONUS Points—Defense

Passing Yards Under 150 = 5 points
Rushing Yards Under 100 = 5 points
Every Sack = 1 point
Every Interception = 1 point

BONUS Points—Team

Win = 10 points
Loss = -10 points
Shutout = 10 points
Getting Shutout = -10 points
Upset Top 25 Team = 20 points
Beat Lesser Top 25 Team = 10 points

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<input type="checkbox"/> Alabama \$1,320,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Georgia Tech \$1,215,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Nebraska \$1,435,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Syracuse \$820,000
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<input type="checkbox"/> Boston College \$1,120,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Kentucky \$385,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Notre Dame \$1,400,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Tulane \$305,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Bowling Green \$530,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Louisville \$850,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Ohio State \$2,135,000	<input type="checkbox"/> UCLA \$1,255,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Brigham Young \$400,000	<input type="checkbox"/> LSU \$1,415,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Oklahoma \$2,200,000	<input type="checkbox"/> USC \$1,840,000
<input type="checkbox"/> California \$365,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Marshall \$895,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Oklahoma State \$790,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Utah \$425,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Central Florida \$485,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Maryland \$1,745,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Oregon \$1,430,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Vanderbilt \$300,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Cincinnati \$475,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Miami (Ohio) \$775,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Oregon State \$1,275,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Virginia \$1,320,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Clemson \$1,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Miami, FL \$2,190,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Penn State \$1,340,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Virginia Tech \$1,670,000
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<input type="checkbox"/> East Carolina \$320,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Minnesota \$990,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Rice \$300,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Washington State \$1,325,000
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Uncharted Waters

Solich says his sixth Nebraska team needs to 'move forward . . . not dwelling on last season'



Mike BABCOCK

THE SPORTING NEWS, in its Aug. 11 "College Football Preview," establishes 10-to-1 odds that "Nebraska will win enough games to save Frank Solich's job" this season.

That is considerably better than the odds Rick Neuheisel will be coaching at the college level in 2003 (25-1) or the odds Notre Dame will win its first eight games, as it did a season ago (50-1).

A "dual-position player" winning the Heisman Trophy is off the charts (100-1).

In contrast, the odds are better (8-1) that a receiver will win the Heisman Trophy.

The Sporting News line is for entertainment purposes only, of course, but it reflects an attitude shared by some folks around the country, that Solich's job is in immediate jeopardy. The assumption seems to be, if the Cornhuskers slog through another .500 season, Solich will be in the job market.

Solich is launching his sixth season as head coach in uncharted waters, to be sure. Nebraska isn't in the preseason national rankings for the first time since 1969, when back-to-back 6-4 records had some disaffected boosters in Omaha circulating a petition calling for Bob Devaney's ouster.

The petition followed Devaney's refusal to dismiss some assistants.

Devaney weathered the storm, however, turning over the offense to Tom Osborne, adjusting his recruiting and producing the first of back-to-back national championship teams a year later.

This isn't meant to suggest that the changes Solich has made will lead to a national championship in 2004, or even a serious national championship run a year from now.

But he'll still be the Cornhuskers' coach in 2004, even with another .500 record. (A 4-8 record would be a different matter, of course. But let's be realistic; that isn't going to happen.)

For one thing, new Athletic Director Steve Pederson isn't inclined to make rash decisions, indicating that the program will be evaluated on improvement measured not by wins and losses.

For another, this season will be the first in which the program completely reflects Solich. Certainly, all of the players are his now. They were last season. But the staff is his now, too.

When Osborne stepped aside following the 1997 season, he had assurances from then-Athletic Director Bill Byrne that the staff would remain intact. Staff stability was an important element of Osborne's success, and the loyalty of his assistants was returned in kind. He looked

out for them.

Solich was his hand-picked successor, as he had been Devaney's. Had that decision been left to Byrne, there's some question as to whether Solich would have been promoted.

In any case, Solich got Osborne's job — and had to take his staff.

Whether he wanted the staff in its entirety we don't know. Solich has never said he didn't want all of the assistants to stay, and he's not the sort to say so even if he didn't. Besides, if he had decided to replace someone, fans would have been up in arms. Osborne said nothing would change.

The matter was out of Solich's hands, just as changing the offense was out of his hands in the short term. Imagine the furor if Solich had announced he was scrapping the option.

"But Tom said nothing was going to change, dadgummit. What's the deal?"

When Osborne replaced Devaney, there were changes. Carl Selmer and Jim Walden left immediately and four years later, Monte Kiffin, Warren Powers, Bill Myles and Jim Ross left.

(Ross retired, while Kiffin, Powers and Myles went elsewhere.)

So Osborne was quickly able to shape his staff the way he wanted it.

That wasn't a reflection on those who left. Rather, it was a natural progression in the development of a successful organization, the identification of the right people for Osborne's system.

The 7-7 record forced Solich's changes, but they would have been necessary at some point, anyway. Programs have to adapt in order to survive. They are in constant need of fresh ideas.

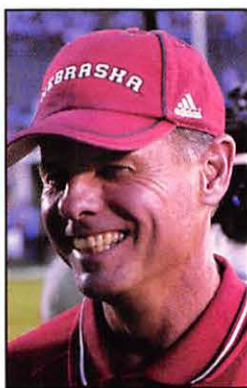
Saying good-bye to the assistants who are gone was difficult, for Solich more so than anyone. But college football is big business these days, and his job as CEO is on the line.

"Last year is obviously in everybody's mind," he said at media day in early August. "But you need to move forward. We need to have a football team that's not dwelling on last season. We need to have a football team that's confident about what it's going to get done this season."

"So we build from that, one day at a time. It's one thing that's been obvious to me since I've been in the coaching profession and I've been under Tom; you better not dwell too much on the past."

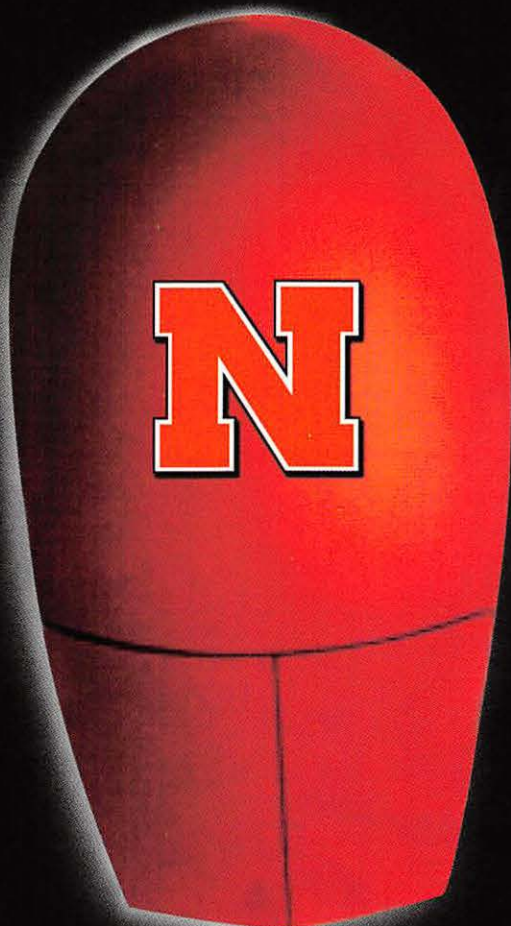
You need to learn from the past, however. Changes down the line have to coincide with changes at the top. Achieving that can be unpleasant, and certainly shouldn't be taken lightly.

That's why the odds should be heavily in Solich's favor. He'll be back in 2004. ■



Frank Solich's first five teams have a combined record of 49-16.

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